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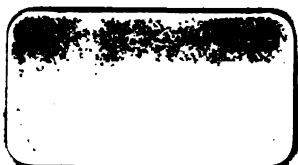
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15. 11. 1971



THE
CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR.

MDCCCLXVI.

NEW SERIES.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell ;
That mind and soul according well,
May make one music as before,

But vaster.—

TENNYSON.



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THE CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR.

JANUARY, 1866.

THE ROUND TABLE.

If any reader, in these days of universal authorship, could be supposed ignorant of the gentle craft, one might propose the question, Which is the last part of a book that the author writes? And the uninitiated would naturally reply that, of course, he writes the last part last. But the craftsman smiles a languid weary smile at the innocence displayed, knowing only too well that when "THE END" meets his eye on the last page of "proof," he has now, alas! to write the beginning, or preface. And preface-writing is the bore of authors, *la bête noire*, the last straw which proverbially produces such a disastrous effect. I wonder there has not sprung up among us, in this age of mushrooms and "sermons-written-to-order," a set of preface-writers by profession.

I sought to enforce some very sound advice the other day, by a sage illustration drawn from what, in one sense, may be called "high life;"—though, to be sure, life soon ceases at that altitude. Quoth I to a man who naturally shrunk from a very painful but still inevitable step, "My good fellow, if you have to be hanged in the morning, you may as well go through the ceremony at nine o'clock, as get it postponed till ten." It was, no doubt, a bit of an early and bitterly learned lesson, savouring of schoolboy reminiscences and philosophers in jackets; for, "If I must be flogged," my chum used to say, "why, I'd rather have it at once, and be done with it." And just so at spring and fall, when the seasonal black-draught was liberally dis-

pensed of a morning, a little before breakfast—which had not then been promoted to the dignity of being called “the matutinal meal,” for the days of fine writing were not yet—some boys, Anglo-Saxon every inch of them, would put out an eager hand, gulp down the horrible mixture (which, nevertheless, by certain “laws of suggestion” might very fairly make one think of nectar) and walk off with all the facial muscles in mild activity.

I am afraid this is a roundabout way of beginning my story. But then, by general consent, beginnings are mostly awkward. Perhaps it would be best to dispense with a beginning altogether. And, indeed, most writers now-a-day dash at once *in medias res*, and then at some suitable opportunity go back to the beginning, which is something like postponing “grace” till the middle of dinner.

I will take my reader into my confidence. I generally do, in fact. He—and let me never be thought unmindful of the softer personal pronoun—always seems a near relation. I think of one and another that I love, and indulge the pleasant fancy that I am writing for them, and others like them. And so I tell more secrets in print than I ever whisper into any ear. Well, what I wished to say, my gentle reader,—only I wanted some one, you see, to exercise on me the art which Sokrates professed to have learnt from his mother—is just this: that though I have called this story, if story it be, The Round Table, you are not to think of the famous round table of King Arthur. And in point of fact I would have called it by some other name, if another as convenient had occurred to me. For there is no mystery, no plot, no incident even, connected with this round table. Happily it was fashioned ages before tables took to misconducting themselves. So let no one fear this respectable old table of mine—mine, however, only as thoughts are mine, and so I may hope that *my* round table will become *your* round table too—is going to play any part. There is no story belonging to it, for nobody knows anything at all about it. And although almost any table of any standing has witnessed all sorts of human doings, certain young folks contriving to sit together at it;—wedding breakfasts perhaps laid out upon it; perhaps also funeral-baked meats; letters that have given a turn and colour to a whole life written on it; and nobody knows what else,—yet I only use this particular round table for the sake of an idea which it gave birth to, and a talk.

So now having fairly warned you that you are not to be looking, expecting, and turning over the pages to get at the round table, I shall feel relieved in my mind, free from the worrying impression that my reader is impatient for me to get on to the

table, which I have no intention of doing. The chapters which follow might just as well have been entitled, *The Gables*, or *the Return*, or *Gaunt House*, or almost anything else; only this which I have chosen is, so far as I know, unappropriated as yet, which is saying a good deal. How in the world is a man in the present day to get a name for his book or story? A friend of mine had a yacht built the other day, and when it was all ready for launching the greatest difficulty of all stared him in the face—for what should he call it? Every name he could think of was already appropriated. Down the lists of the Yacht Clubs he looked, over and over again, to see if this, that, or the other desirable name was at liberty. No. And so at last, in despair, he christened it the——. I must not say what. And so I have got over my

PREFACE.

CHAPTER I.

THE GABLES—THE ARBOUR—THE LETTER—GOING BACK—NIGHT—THE FIRST STAR.

DOES the reader know the ancient and once royally honoured town of Bablyk-Hythe? Strangers sometimes speak of it as only a larger and better kind of village, forsooth; but they had better not speak so in the hearing of any of the natives, for they stand a good deal on the dignity of the place, I can warrant you. Bablyk-Hythe! why, does not everybody know that Richard of the Lion-heart lived there? Nay, I have been assured that it was “at least *one* of his birth-places” even!

Then there was the old Abbey, just outside the town, in the midst of a grove, part of which remains to this day, and is called “The Monks’ Wood.” And a very pleasant spot it is, or was, at least, many years ago, when I was young. A very pleasant spot for a twilight—or say a moonlight—ramble, in and out among those trees, with the little babbling brook winding its way a few feet below you. The trees, I remember, were mostly Scotch fir and beech, with here and there a silver birch, and a few Spanish oaks. There I have walked many and many a time in the happy days “of auld lang syne,” when the voice that softly answered to my own was the sweetest, gentlest in all the world.

And a little way from the town in another direction was a nunnery, amidst the grey old ruins of which I often played when a boy, with companions that are now all gone. Aye, all gone!

But I must not lose myself amid those ivied ruins now, nor begin to tell the old legends about Fair Rosamond, who was said to have lived there once, and who I used to wish, when I was a stripling of eighteen, would appear to me, looking just as she used to look when Henry wooed and won her there. Folly to recall the worse than idle dreams of that silly boyhood. Let them sleep for ever in deepest forgetfulness, as indeed they have never recurred from that time till now, when the past once more rises so vividly before me. But, as I said, I must not lose myself amid those old grey crumbling ruins now, or the reader will turn his back on Bablyk-Hythe and me together, and probably remain for ever ignorant of the fact that the town once boasted of no fewer than fourteen parish churches, dedicated to as many "saints." What has become of the "saints" nobody knows, but the churches, at all events, are no longer in existence, at least not as churches, but there are barns and stables in abundance that have a very ecclesiastical look about them; and carved stone work once belonging to sacred edifices is built into most of the older houses of the town, giving it a very quaint, old-fashioned look. So then, whatever gazetteer may say, it is no wonder if the town holds up its head somewhat proudly, even though somewhat sadly perhaps, like a faded gentlewoman whose fortunes have fallen into decay. Moreover, the great Blank road ran through it, and I can well remember when five and thirty four-horse coaches used twice a day to "change" there, at either the Blue Angel or the Black Boar. But I speak of the past; mayhap the reader has never seen a four-horse coach, for times are changed.

If the reader knows Bablyk-Hythe, which is not at all likely however, he may know that an irregular winding street turns off to the right, as you enter the town from London. If you follow it, you will soon find the houses becoming fewer and farther apart, each standing in its own garden or other grounds; and then you will find yourself in the open country, with hedges on either hand, and fields and meadows, with the river beyond; and then, on the other side of that, the ground rises and is covered with woods.

The last house along that road to the right was called "The Gables," because it had several—four in front, and I think as many at the back, for it was a double house, I remember. It stood back from the road, on much higher ground, with the end of it towards the street, for it faced the east, and it was quite secure against the intrusiveness of passers by. For five-and-twenty years the Langstons had lived there; and there had been births there during those years; there had also been deaths there

as well. It was the house to which Mr. Langston had brought his bride, and in fact it was then that he first took possession of it. Yes, five-and-twenty-years ago! Ah, how bright it was then! The month was May, and the house had been all "done up fresh" for the new tenant, and everything within and without was redolent of welcome to the lady, who, with new and timid delight, entered it as her home, with the future all hidden. He led her from room to room with pardonable pride, and his heart was very glad as her eye looked the satisfaction and gladness which she could not utter, pressing his arm gratefully and fondly. He had chosen to bring her home alone, that they might be free and natural and happy together in their own way. And, indeed, I think that first taking possession together of a new home is rather a solemn thing, however joy, like an ever radiant young Apollo, may smile with promise on the hour. In room after room they stood for a few moments thoughtfully, wondering what scenes might be witnessed there in days to come, and seeking quietly to hallow each by a word or two of quiet prayer. Five-and-twenty years ago! And now? The quarter of a century has been full of incident, at least domestic, and experience; and Mr. Langston feels no arm tremulous with calm delight within his own as he passes from room to room now. The rooms are the same, the furniture is the same, the prospect from their windows is the same; but oh, the change!

It was late in the afternoon of one of the early days in September, and the swallows were assembling in large numbers, and wheeling and careering about the gables and stacks of old-fashioned Elizabethan chimneys, while, also significant of the advance of the season, the ivy was in blossom, and the song of the redbreast was beginning to be the chief noticeable sound in the garden, when Mr. Langston was seeking to obtain in the quiet seclusion of his garden the repose his spirit needed.

He was sitting in his arbour, an arbour of his own planting, composed of a couple of Blenheim orange-trees, with a vine turning in and out all over it, and jasmine and clematis and honeysuckle, while of course the rose was not wanting. It was a large family arbour. In days gone by there had been happy birthday celebrations in it; but now a much smaller bower would have served. There were seldom more than two found in it now, and oftenest only one. Such changes may five-and-twenty years have in store for a man. The dear God help us all! This arbour at the bottom of the garden had its back to the house, and so looked over the landscape to which the reader has been slightly introduced. Mr. Langston then was sitting there on this September afternoon, and musing on many things—among them, on the

painful changes which time brings; how, not only do dear friends pass away, drawn behind the veil, but how sometimes those who once called themselves by that often too lightly assumed and then as lightly abandoned name, change; and how the veriest trifles are enough to offend any who are willing to be offended; and then he opened, not for the first or second time, a letter he had that day received, signed by four or five of his congregation.

I have not mentioned Mr. Langston's calling, and now it is superfluous. But perhaps I had better introduce himself somewhat more formally to my readers. The son of a country gentleman, he had spent his boyhood at Harrow; and in his eighteenth year was entered as a gentleman commoner at Oriël College, Oxford, where he had lived a sort of double life; now ardent in all the athletic exercises of the day, and then for weeks together as devoted to his studies. He was a good rider, a skilful fencer, and he "rowed in the college boat." His father had destined him for the army, having had the promise of a cornetcy for him in the dragoons. This prospect had thoroughly met young Langston's wishes; but there were times when his Alma Mater drew him fondly to her side, and he was ready to give up all ideas of the stirring life of the soldier for the dear delights of learning. He had not yet come to the parting of the ways, and could dream on for a while; now picturing to himself the wild excitements of war, and now charmed by the calmer pursuits of the genius of the place. Thus he at the same time belonged to "a reading set," and yet, on the other hand, would easily be attracted to the tennis court, or the river. In his third year, however, when he was reading for honours, and with every prospect of success, he was suddenly summoned home to his father's death-bed. He was too late to see anything more than the merest wreck of a man. Reason had fled. His talk was wild. Some terrible excitement had seized on him, and he raved. But there was something ominous in his ravings, and at his death the cause of all was revealed. A part of his property was managed by an agent, while a larger part of it was deposited in various forms with a banker whom all the world trusted, and who was a foremost man in all philanthropic and religious movements. Alas for integrity! The agent had long been systematically defrauding the too confiding employer; and the pious banker had, by one clever forgery after another, appropriated and dissipated all the securities he held. And the frank unsuspecting country gentleman awoke suddenly to the sense of utter ruin. Nothing was left him but a small jointure of his wife's, a mere trifle, not more than a hundred a year. The blow stunned him. Reason

staggered and gave way ; and within a week after his necessitated removal to an asylum, he died suddenly. The shock proved too much for the widow, who drooped and pined, and in less than three months was laid beside her broken-hearted husband in the still churchyard, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

Of course the prosecution of his Oxford course was altogether out of the question. Neither did the army offer any attractions to him now, all his fortune consisting in the small income derived from his mother. At first, he was borne down by the weight of his woe. Life was a blank to him. His spring, just full of summer promise, had suddenly turned to worse than November chilliness and dreariness. He was listless, moody, wretched ; sometimes bitter, and sometimes full of despair and dark imaginings. He longed to lay him down and die. Death had at times a terrible fascination for him ; and in after-years he often shuddered at the recollection of thoughts that had haunted him, and promptings strange and awful he was conscious of, and scarcely cared to struggle against. But a young man of one-and-twenty, of good constitution, and unworn in the ways of vice, has a large fund of vitality, which, though sorrow may largely draw upon, it does not exhaust. And in time the first benumbing effect of his grievous loss and bitter disappointment began to yield ; and he now and then caught himself listening to the sounds of nature, observing the sky and clouds, and the growth of the grass, and feeling the sunshine warm and the breeze exhilarating.

And with the gradual re-awakening of life within him, he became for the first time conscious of a new and deeper want than any he had hitherto experienced. And yet he knew not what it was he wanted. His thoughts turned in the direction of those truths of Christianity which he had never questioned, never believed,—only accepted, as a matter of course. If any question had been asked him in class about the history or geography or biography of the Scriptures, he would have answered satisfactorily. And so, too, all the usual examination questions “in Divinity,” so called, he would have replied to at least as well as others, better than the average. And the usual “Scripture proofs of the Articles” he knew very well, and could have satisfied any old college don that all the Thirty-nine were perfectly “agreeable to God’s Holy Word.” A very easy thing to do, in fact ; for if three or four texts dislocated from their place may be accepted as “proofs,” which is the favourite method to this day with most folks I fancy,—why then you may prove anything you like from the Bible, which is the most passive and pliable nose of wax in the world. He could have demonstrated “the

Trinity;" "the Athanasian Creed;" being very fairly up in Pearson and similar authors.

And yet, in this awful hour of buried love and crushed hope, when the past was a bitter mockery, the future a dreary blank, and the present an aching void and wretched sense of lostness, in this hour of unutterable woe, "Creeds," and "Articles," and "Scripture proofs" could do nothing for him. His poor bleeding heart and weary flesh cried out for—he knew not what; afterward he would have said—For the LIVING GOD! He had a vague sense that religion was what he needed. But what was religion? Where, how, was he to get it? He went to church as a matter of course, but the clergyman mumbled through the service—we are speaking now of perhaps forty years ago, be it remembered—and the old clerk brayed out *Aa-men*! mechanically, and there was nothing in it at all. The clergyman, who generally wore a velvetreen shooting-jacket, and had a pointer or two always at his heels, told him to cheer up, to go into company, invited him once or twice to a ball at the vicarage, but by-and-by gave over his well-meant but futile endeavours, and said to his friends that "that young Langston was but a milk-sop after all, to lay things to heart as he did."

The family mansion and grounds, and furniture, and plate, and pictures, and everything, had been sold off by auction. All was gone. Everything and everybody! And he was alone. No wonder that his heart and his flesh still cried out for—he knew not what. And still he inwardly called that unknown mysterious something—"religion." And still, though so naming it, he seemed as far as ever from the reality. He tried to pray. He said the Lord's Prayer. He repeated the collect "Lighten our darkness." He took to reading the New Testament; and, although, as I have said, he could have undergone an examination in it with credit, yet the book seemed quite a new book. The God of the Psalms was a different God from the God of the Athanasian Creed. And the Christ of the four gospels was a different Christ from the Christ of Divinity Examination papers. Oh that some living human voice would tell him the secret! What was prayer? What was faith? Where was God? How was he to conceive of Him when he tried to pray? And when he prayed he did not feel any nearer to God, nor God any nearer to him. And he rose from his knees, sighing, "Oh that some kind angel would appear to me, and teach me how to pray, and how to believe, and how to seek God so as to find Him!" But no angel ever stood before him. No voice ever fell on his ear. No sudden thrill of consciousness of God filled his heart with strange and holy joy. And yet not one of his poor endeavours was in vain. Not one of his poor bewildered

cries was unheard or unregarded. During all those dark and desolate days and nights his Heavenly Father was leading him and guiding him, according to the blessed promise, "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."*

One evening in August he had wandered listlessly and sad through lanes and cornfields and meadows, where the cattle were all looking so quietly happy, forming such a contrast to himself, and he wandered on and on, till he came to the outskirts of a common, covered over with furze in full yellow bloom. Cottages were sprinkled here and there over the common, and women were gathering furze to burn for the evening fire. Children were looking for blackberries, and thrushes and blackbirds were singing their evening song; and, blended with all the sounds of nature, there came a sound as of people singing. And he saw a little on one side of the road a plain whitewashed building, whence the sound evidently came. He drew near. He had never been into any such place in his life. He stood in the little lobby, and as he stood two or three poor women passed in, and a labouring man or two, looking contented and pleased. He presently went in. It was a small, unpretentious building: plain benches with backs, all occupied by the poor people of the neighbourhood. In the desk was a man whose appearance seemed to denote nothing above the mechanic. He read the Scriptures reverently and with feeling, however; and although he was innocent of *h's*, and utterly unmindful of vowels, yet somehow there was something in the man's reading that told on the poor wanderer's heart. Then he prayed, not out of a book, but "out of his own head," or perhaps heart; and he seemed as if he had that very secret which Langston had been so longing to possess. How earnestly he prayed! and as if he were sure God was listening to him, and would answer him. And presently he preached—did not read a sermon, but preached, as he had prayed, "out of his own head," or perhaps heart. And now he seemed as if his one want was to get the people to see, and feel, and be blessed, as he himself saw, and felt, and was blessed. The young collegian looked at him with wonder. The man had an intelligent countenance, a good head, and a modest, honest, confident manner with him. And the poor people around him seemed *en rapport* with the preacher. They took things which the Oriel man did not exactly see, and nodded their heads approvingly, and now and then he heard a suppressed hum of quiet satisfaction. Oddly enough, he thought of the kine he had just before

* Isaiah xlii. 16.

seen so calmly chewing the cud in the meadow, in the summer evening sunshine; and when the sermon was ended, and the preacher gave out the hymn, to the tune "Mariner's," did not the people sing lustily, and as though they meant it?

'Tis religion that can give
Sweetest pleasures while we live;
'Tis religion must supply
Solid comfort when we die.

After death its joys will be
Lasting as eternity.
Be the living God my friend!
Then my bliss shall never end.

Langston was surprised, disturbed, half-amused, slightly vexed, but more pleased. He knew no more than he knew before, but he felt something new; and he had a belief, which made him glad, that some of these people—the preacher surely—could give him the clue he had been seeking for, for they seemed to have something that he had not. The singing was rude enough, in all conscience, and yet there was a something in it which made it more like worship, more like reality, than the singing of the surpliced choristers in the college chapel, or than the full cathedral service at Christ Church, which he had so often gone to of an afternoon in those pleasant old Oxford days. It was as though in his dark sky the first little faint twinkling promise of a star had appeared. He determined he would join the preacher on his way home, and see if there was in him the living light he was pining for. So leaving the little chapel, he strolled apart, till he should see which way the preacher would take. But outside the place, which he saw was called "Ebenezer," there were so many hand-shakings, and so many little kind things to be said to one and another, that some minutes elapsed before the good man was clear of them all, and then he started off at a sturdy pace to go to the neighbouring town. Langston then joined him.

(To be continued.)

THE NEW-YEAR'S EVE OF AN UNHAPPY ONE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF JEAN PAUL FR. RICHTER.

ONE New-year's Eve an old man stood at the window, and looked up with a glance of anxious despair at the immovable and ever-beautiful sky, and down at the still, pure, white earth, upon which none was at this moment so joyless and sleepless as he, for his grave lay near him. It was bare with the snow of age, not covered with the verdure of youth, and he brought with him out of his whole long life nothing but errors, sins, and diseases, a wasted frame and a desolate soul, a breast full of poison and an old age full of remorse. The beautiful days of his youth hovered around him like apparitions, and drew him again towards the lovely morning when his father had, for the first time, placed him at the parting of the ways—the one to the right, leading along the sunny path of virtue into a broad peaceful land, full of light and harvests and angels; and that, to the left, conducting, in the mole tracks of vice, down into a black cavern full of dropping poison, full of serpents ready to strike, and of dark, sweltering damps.

Ah! the snakes hung upon his heart, and the poison-drops upon his tongue; and he now knew where he was!

Senseless and with unspeakable grief he called aloud to heaven, "Give me my youth again! Oh, father, place me again at the parting of the ways, that I may choose differently." But his father and his youth were far, far off. He saw wandering lights dancing upon marshes, and become extinguished on the graveyard, and he said, "They are my foolish days!" He saw a star fall from heaven, glittering as it fell, and become extinguished on the earth. "That am I," said his bleeding heart, and the snake-like teeth of remorse buried themselves deeper into the wounds thereof.

His burning imagination showed him fleeing night-wanderers upon the roofs, and the windmill threateningly raised its arms to dash him in pieces, and a mask remaining in the empty charnel-house gradually assumed his features. Suddenly, in the midst of the conflict, the New-year's music floated down from the tower like a distant anthem. He was more softly moved. He looked around the horizon and over the wide earth, and he thought of the friends of his youth, who, happier and better than he, were the teachers of the earth, the fathers of happy children, and blessed men; and he said, "Ah! I also, like you, might have slumbered through this New-year's night with unweeping eyes,

if I had willed it so ! Ah, you dear parents, if I had fulfilled your New-year's wishes and teachings, I might have been happy !"

In the feverish remembrances of his youth it seemed to him as if the mask with his features rose up in the charnel-house ; at last, by means of the superstition, which on a New Year's night beholds the spirits of the future, it became a living youth.

He could see it no longer ; he covered his eyes ; a thousand hot tears streamed upon the snow, till their very source was dry. He only sighed forth, softly, disconsolately, and unconsciously, " Oh, days of my youth, return ; only return !"

And they returned, for on this New Year's Eve it was only a dream that he had so fearfully dreamed.

He was still a youth, only his errors had been no dream. But he thanked God that he, still young, could retrace the miry paths of vice, and return to the sunny path of virtue, which leads into the rich harvest lands.

Turn with him, young man, if thou standest in his path of error. This fearful dream will be thy judge hereafter ; but if on some future day, full of anguish, thou shouldst exclaim, " Return, beautiful days of my youth," they will return no more.

DIVINE ORDINATION OF NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL WINTER.

GOD's covenant with men, his ordinance of heaven and earth, is that " while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." This is an illustration of His general method of procedure. The processes of His government are symbolized, not by the straight line, but by the wave ; He accomplishes His purposes, not by the uniform progress of the same conditions, but by the constant recurrence of conditions, quite opposite in character and manifestation. Winter is as much a " good gift and perfect gift " as summer ; for all the higher forms of life, and for the completeness of God's order of the world, winter is useful, needful. Winter's rest is as necessary as the activities of spring ; to be fertile, the clod must stiffen and be pulverized by the rigid frost ; and the brooks must sometimes be locked up, if they are to preserve a healthful flow. Germs ripen during the long months of cold as well as under the sun's genial rays ; all the

winter through, the trees are consolidating into firm wood the tender branches and flowing sap that summer has elaborated. Consolidation is as necessary as growth ; life has to harden into force, in order to new and larger activity. To men, relaxed by a sultry sun, winter comes with an invigorating, tonic power ; out of winter, as out of a cold bath, they come refreshed, glowing, strengthened.

All this is as true in the spiritual, as in the natural world. Spiritual growth proceeds under the same conditions of change and temporary contrast as bodily growth. The life of the soul, the life of the church, has each its seasons ; so long as this lasts on earth, "seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, do not cease." Nor is spiritual winter a season for mourning, as though it were all evil, all due to our own faultiness. Winter is part of God's order in spiritual life, and He has blessed purposes to be served by it.

The words "summer in the soul," "winter in the soul," carry their own suggestions ; they call up images rather than stand in need of definition. Summer is distinguished by manifest fulness of life ; active life ; life growing and increasing ; life proclaiming itself to all the senses, and rejoicing them all, putting itself forth in shapes of loveliness and rich colours, in sweet odours and pleasant sounds. "The winter is past, and the rain is over and gone ; the flowers appear on the earth ; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land ; the fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with their tender grapes give a good smell." Summer is marked by tender calm, by beauty and delight. The earth is clad with soft verdure, relieved by brilliant hues, and breathing sweets. The seas are hushed to rest ; the brooks, that once were swollen to hoarseness, now ripple peacefully. There are cheerful heavens and a smiling sun ; zephyrs breathe, and rains are gentle ; under the joyous skies there is a joyous earth ; "the pastures are clothed with flocks, the valleys also are covered over with corn ; they shout for joy, they also sing." Summer brings also awakened and quicker sensibilities ; feeling is in harmony with external aspect ; and all living creatures receive delight from nature's wealth. Sentient life is full and peaceful ; birds warble their gladness ; sheep gambol and goats skip ; the heavy oxen luxuriate in rich pasture. Men forget their sorrows and lay down their burdens ; health is borne on summer breezes, and peace is whispered from summer skies ; to breathe is to be happy, and life is bliss.

The difference between summer and winter is, however, one of feeling, not of life ; the contrast is rather that of opposite manifestations of life, than of life and death. Endurance is as much

a quality of life as growth is ; the power of living creatures to resist the operation of the elements is as truly a measure of their vitality, as is their power of increase. Compare a tree in summer with the same tree in winter ; in contrast with its myriad leaves, its delicate blossoms and glowing fruit, the barren branches and dry twigs might seem to speak of death. Yet the tree remains firm, under frosts that would turn a log to touchwood. The amount of moisture contained in a tree, if it existed in the crevices of monstrous crags, would, under the action of the freezing winter, rend cliff after cliff, and hurl their fragments thundering down. Yet the tree stands unmoved by frost ; the force of life preserves it still a tree. At the first touch of cold, innumerable insects bury themselves deep in the earth, where their vital energies maintain them, while fallen leaves and twigs are being converted into mere mould. The dormouse, the squirrel, and the bear could not slumber peacefully away the weeks of cold, but for the power of life within them : their energy of life is seen in the maintenance of their bodily warmth and the continuance of their bodily functions, while the snow covers them and the frost crisps the surface of their lair. A change in the aspect of life is not a loss of life itself ; the God of life is present in winter as in summer. Present, and active too ; the energies of the ever-working Father not only sustain life during winter, but by winter are also preparing for renewed activities, more healthful growth, and luster increase.

The true spiritual analogue of winter, then, is not spiritual death, not even feeble spiritual life ; nor needs the words "winter in the soul" suggest dismay and despondency, as though, at such a time, we were lacking the inspiring presence of the living God. It may have some of the appearance of death—to thoughtless observers it may seem to be death ; but even in its winter, the regenerate differs from the unregenerate soul by a difference that is infinite, eternal.

When we speak of "summer in the soul," we think of elevated emotions, and quick spiritual sensibilities. We recognise the time when we are full of liveliest zeal ; when adoration is spontaneous, when prayer rises in our hearts, and praise is ever sitting on our lips ; when ardent ejaculations come unbidden, and we are sensitive to every prompting of the indwelling spirit, responsive to innumerable divine appeals. There are such times in Christian experience ; when Christian activity needs no effort, and Christian affection is instinctive ; when all the impulses tend to Christ, and to live is to be godly. There are times when the reverse of all this is found :—when external influences and internal impulses seem alike devoid of spiritual savour ; when Christian feeling has to be cultivated, with all-carefulness ; when

the spirit has to be summoned to worship; when we have to watch if we would pray, and to school ourselves into thankfulness. Not now is emotion unbidden, not now are our spirits sensitive; effort rather than enjoyment marks our spiritual activity; faith has to endure coldness instead of expanding under genial influences, to resist adverse powers, not simply to rejoice in conscious fulness.

It is part of God's own ordinance that spiritual life should be subject to such changes; we cannot always trace them to our own heedlessness. Often, indeed, we may find the reason of such an alteration in our sins; carelessness will change sensibility into torpor, activity into feebleness. Love of the world chills, as it steals over us; doubt will transfigure bloom to barrenness; sin always checks divine affection, and gives us bitterness for peace. But, very often, the change comes on us unawares; gradually we become conscious of an altered spiritual state; we are still earnest, still obedient; we preserve our fidelity to Christ, and yet our emotions lose their freedom, and spiritual life is more and more an effort. It is God's will that it should be so. Here, as in all His works—we find, not the uniform progress of the same conditions, but a succession of varying discipline. Now we are called on for effort, now permitted to enjoy; at one time feeling predominates, at another thoughtfulness, forecast; sometimes spontaneous emotion gives birth to sacred meditation, again we have to meditate that we may feel. The wise Christian knows that his spiritual life is thus varied for him: remembering how through protracted seasons of experience so different, he has grown in grace, he will see in these changes diverse manifestations of the One Spirit who is ever with him.

Moreover, it is not in individual experience alone that this law of spiritual seasons is found operative; even more remarkable are the changing conditions of Christian societies. There is often a wonderful harmony of spiritual state between a pastor and his people, and between all the members of a church. Without any conference, they utter the same language, breathe the same feeling. Their sensibilities are awakened simultaneously; throughout a whole church there will be a deepened emotion, and an increasing faith. Sermons will, week after week, be marked by unusual pathos, and the congregation will be attuned to responsive sensibility; the prayers of the people will have greater fervour, their worship more ardent aspiration. The disciples are all of one accord, and there comes—naturally, harmonizing with their common feeling—the “sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind;” “cloven tongues, like as of fire,” sit on every head; all filled together with the Holy Ghost begin to speak together the same things. And this, not so much be-

cause one impresses another with his own convictions, as because the same conviction has been secretly infusing itself into all. They speak "as the Spirit gives them utterance," and are prepared for each other's words, so that "all hear in their own tongue" the same message, and each expresses the common utterance of the Church. Further, districts of churches will be simultaneously thus aroused. A revival of religion, so called, is rarely confined to one congregation. The desires of many Christian societies are spontaneously aroused in harmony : as though they had met and planned a common operation, sought to cultivate a common state of emotion, they feel and speak and work similarly. It is not a mere sympathy of hysteric passion that passes over whole lands,—the hysteric passion itself is but the caricature of a real accord of which God himself is the author. Summer comes not to one field alone, nor to one belt of country, but to the whole of God's heritage.

So, too, does winter creep on ; not over a solitary soul, but often over a congregation, a number of congregations, the Church at large. Gradually the state of feeling is altered for them all. The pathetic and fervid utterance gives way to a calmer voice ; the congregations are prepared to receive words that shall instruct, rather than words that shall melt. The effort to edify and consolidate the Church will be as general as was the appeal to the emotions ; the language of thoughtful wisdom will be heard in the pulpits which of late resounded with passionate exhortation and warm desire. This is not due to a general laxity, a general feebleness of spiritual life ; it is the orderly change from spiritual summer to spiritual winter. Unseen, yet very really, God's Spirit is at work, altering influences, changing modes ; while He introduces a new state of spiritual experiences, seeking to accomplish varied objects, and summoning to new modes of improving His presence.

One of the purposes of spiritual winters is the confirmation and strengthening of faith. It might seem as though quickened religious sensibilities and rapid success in labour were most favourable to faith. The ardour of Christian emotion makes it easy to believe in Christian truth : strong feeling prompts to a confession distinct as that of Peter, "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." When we see whole assemblies moved by the simple, impulsive preaching of the gospel, doubt seems scarcely possible. The burning zeal which breathes through impassioned exhortation, and prompts to prayer, that has the assurance of its answer in the firmness with which it grasps the blessing, diffuses itself in many a heart hitherto cold, and changes distrustfulness into confidence that God is working. Faith is, indeed, thus

stimulated; but faith must not only be stimulated, it needs also to be confirmed. The boy, who in summer sows his mustard-seed, has not long to wait, nor is his faith much tried; in a few hours he sees the yellow seed transformed into green blades. "The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it until it receives the early and latter rains." During many weeks of winter he has to wait, wrestling down his anxieties as he beholds his fields flooded or frost-bound, and marks how the sun delays his coming. He has to sustain himself by faith that "summer and harvest shall not cease." Christian faith must be not only the trusting impulse of the child; it must have the calm confidence of the man. Patience is a part of manly trust; faith confides in the unseen operations of God, as well as traces His hand in His visible workings. A faith supported only on emotion, resting in frames and seasons, is never a strong faith; impulse grows through patience into energy; emotion is subdued, that faith may be confirmed; progress is concealed that we may more entirely confide in the unseen God. Faith is thus made to "stand," not in feeling, nor in result alone, but "in the power of God."

Spiritual winter acts as a check upon excesses. The life which the sun fosters is not all healthful; corruption, too, is active under summer heats. Blighting insects, fiery scorpions, the deadly serpent, fever and malaria are bred of warmth. Often the rapid increase of loathsome creatures is in proportion to their loathsomeness; the world would become unbearable, but that winter comes to check their increase and destroy their power. Have we not seen what fatal excesses are sometimes the sequel of revivals? Licentiousness comes of corrupting spiritual energies; sensibility has a terrible tendency to pass into sensuality. The unchecked indulgence of even the purest impulses is not favourable to true Christian manhood; long-continued fervour of emotion enervates the soul. God, therefore, breathes forth a cooler air, subdues feeling and chastens passion, gives us to resist as well as to enjoy. The tide of genial influence ebbs, and a healthful chill is spread around us.

There are other excesses, not in themselves fatal, but dangerous, and likely, if indulged in, to interfere with general Christian progress. Sometimes, when summer lingers long, vegetable growth proceeds too far. Sprays are formed which the vital power of the tree cannot support; they would, if permitted to remain, wear out the tree, and, instead of yielding much fruit in after years, it would be disfigured by a lean and straggling excess of feeble twigs. Frost is nature's pruning-hook; the storm brings down a shower of decaying sprays. It is thus that, under strong excitement, we often plan works beyond our power to execute; and there is

danger, if we carry them on, that all our energies will be expended in feeble efforts, nothing being done because too much is undertaken. Special services often interfere with the regular ministrations of the gospel; common duty is neglected while men are seeking to work new wonders. God's restraining influence is therefore felt; the decay of first enthusiasm recalls to ordinary work. Churches and Christians would often be spared severe chastisements for neglected duty, if they were prompt to recognize God's meaning in a change of spiritual feeling. The overgrowth which resists the frost the gardener's knife must cut away.

There is much in the training of the Christian character and of the Christian church for which a subdued and quiet state of emotion is more favourable than a state of excitement. For instance, the formation of clear opinions as to Christian doctrine, and the revelation of God's character and will in the Bible, is important. The gospel appeals to our intelligence, as well as to our feelings. We have to serve God "with the spirit, and with the understanding also." We should be able to "give a reason for the hope that is in us." We are to be "well instructed." We are spoken to as "wise men," who can "judge what is said." We are to "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good." Quickened sensibilities and fervid emotions are not necessarily inconsistent with the calmest judgment, the clearest intelligence. There is a transparency in the summer as in the winter atmosphere; warm light unveils the distant hills, and spreads a wide landscape before us, just as much as cold light. In the clear winter sky the stars shine with piercing lustre; on summer nights they stoop to us with larger, mellower blaze. Still, there often is a throb and tremulousness in the heated air that interferes with vision, and the purple vapours, though beautiful, are deceptive. As a fact, it is true that strong religious excitement tends to become unfavourable to clear and complete conceptions of truth. When almost every passage of holy writ stirs the deepest feeling, and every thought is rapt, we can scarcely take a connected view of the whole revelation of God; we cease to study while we adore. A congregation under strong excitement often finds doctrinal statement or Scriptural exposition dry, and calls it unspiritual. In order that this needful work may not be neglected, God fits men for it. He gives them winter for the study of truth.

Self-culture and church discipline find their appropriate season in the calmer time. With the stress of summer upon him, the farmer is compelled for a little to neglect himself and the general business of his farm. Fruits must be garnered as they ripen; regard to health, the study of the markets, the suc-

cession of crops, the balancing of accounts, are little thought of, when every day is almost too short for its necessary labour. We cannot examine ourselves when we are full of emotion. Self-culture gives way to spiritual enjoyment. A church thrilling with high-wrought sensibilities can scarcely give minute attention to its discipline. That carefulness may not be forgotten—that each one, being proved, may have his appropriate labour and his portion in due season, God subdues emotion, sends spiritual winter.

For certain aspects of the gospel, too, a calm condition is fitter than excitement. Duty, responsibility, self-restraint—these are true Christian words. Sobriety, circumspection, endurance, forbearance—these also are Christian graces. God gives the opportunity for their exercise, provides the influences favourable for their cultivation.

Spiritual life appears invested with dignity, as it is seen progressing under various seasons and manifold change. The gourd which springs up in a night is not the highest type of vegetable growth; it also perishes in a night; while trees that endure winter as well as expand in summer, measure their age by centuries. There are insects whose life is all summer, for they only live a summer day. Those nations are the noblest which are under temperate zones, where all the seasons are most nearly balanced. Because spiritual life is so broad, its changes are so many. All moral forces unite for its perfection, all kinds of influence are needed for its maturity.

That Christian, that Church will be most healthful, most useful, that is most ready to respond to all God's varying plan. Summer must not be spent in enjoyment, nor winter wasted in repining. The grasshopper who sang all the summer, when winter came found herself starving. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise; which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest." The stimulated energies of a revival time must be preserved and carried on into colder periods. The clear vision and calm judgment which the winter of the soul is fitted to impart must be treasured up for the right improvement of the season when emotion shall be again excited, and favour shall be renewed. Each period has its discipline, its special labours, and all unite to make strong Christians, useful men of God.

God's spiritual work is ordered according to the same laws as His natural work; the order of the world is typical of His government of souls. All natural laws are the "patterns of things in the heavenlies." God promised that "seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night

should not cease," that men might be assured that He would not again destroy them. Changing spiritual seasons are an earnest that God designs spiritual life to be undying, undecaying.

A.M.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.*

WAS the Gospel of John written with a polemical aim? In answering this question affirmatively Dr. Hengstenberg agrees with a very early writer. Irenæus held that "John, the disciple of our Lord, desired by the publication of his Gospel to abolish that error which Cerinthus had sown among men, and, long previously, those who are called Nicolaitanes." Cerinthus, according to the same father, denied the identity of Jesus and Christ, and substituted for it a loose connection between them. He taught that Jesus was the Son of Joseph and Mary after the manner of other men; that Christ came upon Him at His baptism, and departing from Him again before His passion, left the mere man Jesus to undergo suffering.

The fact that there was such teaching in the time of St. John is sufficient, independently of the express statement of Irenæus, to raise the question whether that Gospel whose theme throughout is "The Word was made flesh"—the perfect incarnation of God in Jesus—was not written with a distinctively controversial or apologetic aim.

The writer of this newest commentary on the Gospel holds his opinion of its polemic origin on these grounds—that otherwise its main theme would not so systematically have pervaded the whole book, down to its minutest details—that the Gospel winds up impressively with the unbelief of Thomas, the closing words, stating the scope of the book, being immediately added, "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name;"—that this Evangelist is unlike the others in his earnest assertions of his own truthfulness—that it is characteristic of Scripture generally to present Truth in its reference to the existing relations and errors of the age—that the polemical design is not made more evident, because that would have taken off the edge of the weapon—that the other writings of John vigorously wage

* "Commentary on Gospel of St. John, by Dr. Hengstenberg." Clark, vols. i. and ii.

war against certain prevalent evils and errors, and that there are such points of harmony between these other writings and the Gospel, as would indicate that both were written with the same definite aim; the Gospel being, in fact, the necessary ground for the more palpable assaults on heresy and worldliness found in the Epistles and Apocalypse.

Each of these arguments has weight in favour of the author's conclusion, and requires full and fair consideration by those who cannot accept it. The limits of a magazine article will not admit of this, but we suggest one consideration on the other side that seems to have greater weight than the sum of these. The impression received from such a portraiture of our Lord as John's Gospel contains, is that it sprang from an insight, admiration, and sympathy in the writer's mind that must have found utterance, whether or not there had been Gnostics to refute. A pure Christianity will be in antagonism with the wild speculations or wild passions of every age. A portrait of Jesus by an appreciating, adoring, loving disciple will ever seem to be drawn purposely to shame the distortions of men who make a Christ to suit their own fancies or theories.

The question of the apostle's design is thus put by Dr. Hengstenberg—Was it "merely to raise those who stood in a lower stage of faith to a higher one, or has he in view the doubts which were already stirring in his own time?" and, notwithstanding our respect for the judgment of the proposer of this question, we are compelled to dissent from his opinion in this case. We can imagine no persons so fitted to receive and profit from this Gospel, or so likely to be present to the Evangelist's mind when writing it, as childlike believers, with that measure of faith that creates desire for a larger. While stating our own opinion, however, on this question, we would do something better—namely, commend Hengstenberg's reasons for his own opposite conclusion to the reader's careful thought; especially his demonstration of the echo that is in the Epistles and Apocalypse to the tone of the Gospel.

We pass to the relation between the fourth and the other three Gospels, and will endeavour to give in a few words the substance of the opinions on this point, put forward in the work before us.

John everywhere assumes the existence of the first Gospels, and especially connects his own work with Luke's; not as a correction, but a supplement; designing to make his Gospel, with the former, one whole. The entire character of John's Gospel shows that it was designed to serve as a topstone. As John had the other Gospels in view, so they were written in anticipation of his supplement. This mutual reference accounts for

the Galilean life of our Lord occupying so small a place in John's Gospel, and so large an one in the others; for the omission from the first three of important events at Jerusalem, while yet they imply His visits there; for the omission also of the great discourses connected with the feeding of the multitude, and of the raising of Lazarus. The other Evangelists abstained from recording both words and works of our Lord of unsurpassed significance and value, out of deference to John, whose higher qualifications to write of them they so deeply felt and acknowledged.

This strikes us as highly unnatural. If there are cases in which we may allow our preferences to guide us to our conclusions in reasoning, this is one. We prefer to stand in utter ignorance of the reasons of the important omissions in the earlier Gospels, rather than conclude that there was an intentional abstinence (out of deference to one who should afterwards write of them) from all reference to such subjects as the marriage at Cana, the interviews with Nicodemus and the woman of Samaria, the discourses on the Bread of Life and the Good Shepherd, and the raising of Lazarus. The theory that the earlier Gospels were written in anticipation of a supplement, and that John consciously furnished it, adds greatly, in our judgment, to the mystery of both their agreements and discrepancies.

The three Gospels seem to be embodiments of the substance of an earlier oral teaching, the writers drawing from a common source, but independently of one another, and each stamping on his work the impress of his own mind and position. John writing at a later period, and assuming the knowledge of the contents of this oral teaching in his readers, freely follows the impulse moving him to write of the things most deeply impressed on, and most congenial with, his own spirit. Thus we have, in the wisdom of Providence, a supplement to the other Gospels, whose value is the greater because it was so far from being consciously produced as such.

It is in the presentation of our Lord's discourses that the deep distinction is seen between the fourth Gospel and its predecessors. That it carries us in detail through a period of His life scarcely touched by them, is, compared with this, a superficial difference. The wonder is, not that the discourses in John are other than those elsewhere recorded, but that the tone of them is so different, so unlike the productions of the same speaker.

The chief peculiarity of these discourses is the prominence given to the Teacher Himself, as the centre and subject of His own instructions. Consistently throughout, when He speaks it is to draw attention to Himself, yet in a manner that has no savour of human vanity or ambition. He claims for Himself the highest glory, but it is a glory that brings Him into com-

pler fellowship with us rather than one that sets Him alone and at a distance. The more His glory is unveiled, the more He is felt truly and deeply to belong to us. As the light of the sun is not the separation, but the fellowship between the sun and this dark earth, Jesus stands forth in John's Gospel not merely to guide the people to loftier morality and more spiritual obedience to the Divine law, but to draw them to Himself. They know the truth as they know Him; they come to the Father through Him; they live as they feed on Him: they die not, or they rise from the dead, as they believe on Him; they bring forth fruit as they abide in Him.

There are two main causes, we think, for the distinctive character which Christ's teaching bears in the Gospel of John. First, that it presents Him labouring in a different region, and amongst a different people.* In the earlier Gospels we find Him chiefly amongst the peasantry of Galilee—a simple, practical people, to whom teaching plain, literal, embodied in parables, and condensed in maxims, alone was suited. John, on the other hand, furnishes us with discourses delivered to Jews, who had been brought into contact with Greek and Roman influences. And “to those,” says Mr. Westcott, “who were reared under other influences—to the student of the law, ‘the teacher of Israel;’ to the Samaritan, perplexed with doubt about the traditions of her fathers; to the cavillers who reposed in blind confidence on the law, which was daily presented to them in the splendour of a noble ritual; to the disciples growing in faith, and yet unable to bear all that a loving Teacher would disclose, other modes of instruction were adopted; now an awakening dialogue, now a startling revelation, now an outpouring of righteous zeal or gentle tenderness, furnished the materials for that Gospel which penetrates to the depths of individual life.”

We cannot think, however, that this circumstance, important and interesting as it is to bear in mind in comparing the Gospels, wholly accounts for the deep peculiarity of our Lord's teaching as given by John. Is it not the case that a religious teacher, as his insight increases both into human necessities and the truth he brings to meet them, is brought more and more to rely upon *one* theme and *one* method? Does he not learn that there is a unity beneath all varieties of need, and aim more directly at that? Does he not discern a unity beneath the various forms of truth, and delight to see more clearly and dwell more exclusively upon that *one* truth of infinite bearings? Does he not grow out of the notion which haunted him in earlier years of

* See Westcott's *Introd. to the Gospels*, pp. 264-66.

spiritual labour—that he might put forth truth too deep for the capacity of those whom he taught?

We are disposed then to attribute the distinctive character of our Lord's discourses in this fourth Gospel more to *the man who records them* than to the Saviour's design of adapting Himself to the different qualifications of the people He addressed. We have in them Christ's own pure gold, with the impress of the mind that retained and transmitted them.

The unlikeness of John's portraiture of Christ to that of the other Evangelists has been greatly exaggerated. "The Christ of John," it has been said, "differs from that of the synoptical Gospels to such a degree, that it would be easier to imagine two faces to one head, than that these two images can be equally faithful likenesses of the same individual." In opposition to this, we believe that a calm, unprejudiced contemplation of the Gospels will find in them no greater divergence—not even between the fourth and the other three—than may be naturally accounted for from the different minds conceiving and hands executing the representations, coupled with the fact that John's work relates to a different period and sphere of the Saviour's labours.

Any thoughtful and laborious teacher, having loving disciples around him, would feel that the concurrent testimony of several of them was required to the character of his teaching, that it might be rightly understood by the world. One impressed by its homely, practical lessons, would communicate that feature of its character; one would tell how deeply it appealed to the affections, having felt that most himself; one would enter into the deeper truths that illumined the Master's mind, and show the world that there was a profundity in His teachings which never would have been gathered from what the others had said of Him. Differences might be expected in this supposed case quite as wide as we find between John's testimony and that of the other Evangelists to Jesus.

But with what measure of verbal exactness has John recorded the Lord's discourses? It does not seem possible to answer this question with complete precision, but we can point out certain limits within which the true answer lies. That is, we know, on the one hand, what verbal exactness the disciple's report does *not* reach; and, on the other hand, what degree of divergence does *not* exist. We certainly have not the utterances of the Saviour word for word, because John himself wrote them in a different language from that which they were delivered in. And we may say with equal certainty—without being called now to give the grounds of the assertion—that we know they are not the Apostle's own inventions. Keeping wide of both these extremes, we have yet considerable range for coming to our conclusions.

Let us not forget the ardent nature of this disciple, the personal affection for his Master, the deep response of heart with which he received Christ's words, and the lasting impression they must have made upon him. And, although the disciple reproduced the discourses from his memory of them after the lapse of from forty to sixty years, yet this has as much weight on the one side as on the other, for we are often told that, when life's stormy day has sunk into its quiet evening, old men find early memories and impressions flash upon them with wonderful vividness. "And finally," says the wise Tholuck, "we must remember the promise of our Lord, that the Spirit should recall to the memory of the disciples what they had heard. If the Spirit of the Lord touched the soul of the disciples in general, like an electric shock, all the intellectual faculties, and of course the memory of the truths they had heard, must have shared the animating influence. He who believes that in accordance with God's purposes, Christ has appeared in history as a Redeemer, believes at the same time by necessary implication in a transmission of His discourses and acts faithful in all essential respects."

Quitting these more general topics, we shall briefly notice Dr. Hengstenberg's exposition of the principal discourses recorded by John.

The healing of the impotent man at Bethesda, in John v., is followed by the discourse in which the Lord defends Himself from the cavils of the Jews at His violation of the Sabbath. Hengstenberg's leading thoughts on it are as follows:—

Jesus, in replying "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," does not enter into the question of the lawfulness of healing on the Sabbath from the human point of view, but exempts Himself as the Son of God. The sonship He here claims is participation in the Godhead in the incomprehensible sense, through which alone there could be for Him exemption from the Sabbatic command. In virtue of His dignity and authority, and to prove them, Christ set aside the Sabbath rule in this case.

The impossibility of the Son acting independently of the Father is from the same incomprehensible unity of essence.

Of the Father *showing* the Son all that He doeth, it is said—"this *showing*, taken from the human relation of Father to Son, is not to be viewed as dogmatic, but as a conceptional expression." (By which we suppose is meant that it is a figure of speech to express the knowledge Christ had of the Father's plans, without implying that they were communicated to Him as a piece of information.)

The raising of the dead, throughout the discourse, refers both to a spiritual quickening (rather, however, in the sense of raising from misery to happiness than from sin to holiness), and to a

final bodily resurrection. The statement that "the Son quickeneth whom He will" indicates that there is no other limit to the life-giving activity of the Son than His own will, while it is to be remembered that "as a matter of course that will is not an arbitrary will, but governed by the law of Christ's being, according to which He loves those who love Him, and grants life as the reward of faith."

The judgment also committed by the Father to the Son is judgment in the sense of condemnation, and is therefore the antithesis to the quickening, and must emanate from the same Person. Authority and power both to give life and to judge have been bestowed on the Son as the reward of His humiliation in the flesh and obedience unto death, which is the meaning of the expression, "because He is the Son of man."

When Jesus declares that He bears not witness of Himself, but another for Him, that "Other" is the Father, whose testimony comes by three channels, John the Baptist, Christ's works, and Scripture. Jesus, while asserting that the Baptist bore witness to Him, can yet say, "I receive not testimony from man," because the testimony did not originate with John, but was communicated through him. The "works," as bearing testimony to the Son of God, are primarily, though not exclusively, the miracles. The argument against the Jews, that although they thought they had eternal life in the Scriptures, yet they would not come to Jesus for life, to whom the Scripture bore witness, is not a mere *argumentum ad hominem*, but implies that Jesus regarded Scripture in the same light as themselves, as indeed the Father's testimony to the Son.

We hope that in the above sentences we have, so far as they go, faithfully represented Dr. Hengstenberg—by no means an easy task—and we shall now venture a few remarks on his exposition. His analysis of the discourse shows all the sagacity of a veteran expositor; his illustration of the various topics from Old Testament scriptures are wonderfully apt and abundant. But shall we learn from our Lord's violation of the Sabbath rule that there was an incomprehensible dignity belonging to Him which gave Him a right to do so, or shall we learn that Sabbath rules are not to infringe upon the Sabbath spirit, and that He who has in its fulness the spirit of holiness and love needs not, in working according to that spirit, to be restricted by regulations valuable only so far as they teach sinful men what holiness and mercy mean? Was not the meaning of His act this—that all that is good which Sabbath institutions can possibly lead to being already in Jesus, there was for Him no reason for such restrictions—Jesus being already at the goal which Sabbaths were to help men to reach?

Again, the Son's inability to act independently of or differently from the Father points those who seek saving truth in the Bible, not to the mystery of two Persons united in one essence, but to the principle, true in heaven and earth alike, that if any two should be in perfect moral sympathy with each other, "What things soever the one doeth, these also doeth the other likewise." If the moral impulse and aim which I act from is always in perfect harmony with that which is at the root of another's life, then our "doings," however different in *form*, perfectly and undeviatingly coincide in *reality*; what I do he does likewise; and what he does is "shown" to me in the deepest sense. That "the Son can do nothing of Himself but what He seeth the Father do," is, we believe, because Father and Son can only do what is holy and good. Can there be a sublimer union between Jesus and the Father than this?—or a more perfect unity of action than this?

With regard to the reference of the words of Jesus on raising the dead to both spiritual quickening and bodily resurrection, what is the link that unites these two subjects together, so that the same expressions may refer to both? Is it merely the *analogy* between them; or are they vitally, organically connected? We do not find an answer in Hengstenberg to this question, and are glad to supplement his exposition by a profound remark of Tholuck's:—"Not merely in this passage, but in Paul also, surprise may be excited by the close connection and reciprocal dependence in which the bodily and spiritual resurrection are placed. The question hinges upon the idea which we form of the resurrection of the body; were it a purely outward occurrence in the way in which the words in verse 28 depict it, the bond of union between the spiritual and the physical resurrection could here be sought only in the *creative omnipotence*; but starting from the declaration Rom. viii. 10 and 11, which on this point is of such weight, the new investiture with the body is to be regarded as the ultimate point of the working of the principle of redemption. As the soul in the formation of the embryo is the "prius" of it and its shaping principle, thus the spirit of man filled by Christ forms its new externality."

We shall enter more deeply into the spirit of John's Gospel and have more to write in praise of Dr. Hengstenberg's commentary when directing the readers of a future number to subsequent discourses of our Lord.

(To be continued.)

HOME!

[Deeply impressed with the conviction that the importance of HOME to society, the Church, and the nation cannot be exaggerated, and is often perniciously under-estimated, and satisfied that many of our readers will gratefully welcome any hints by which the sanctities and the blessedness of this divinely fundamental institution may be promoted, we propose, for a few months, to devote a small portion of our space to a matter which the Christian and the patriot alike feel to be of unspeakable importance. And as it is well to begin at the beginning, we make a commencement with the "Nursery" itself; assuring our readers that the articles, of which we now present them with the first, are by a writer who has often delighted them before, and whose right to an honourable place in our literature is acknowledged.—
ED.]

NURSERY NURTURE.—No. I.

BABIES CRYING.

"A Time to Cry."

Any who have been happy enough to have received christian nurture themselves, and who have been called to repeat in a home full of their own children a system of training, will have something to say which any parents, who are understanding and accepting their parental responsibility, will be glad to hear.

Only those, perhaps, who have been educated at home, and whose profession has enabled them to continue an unbroken home life, can be regarded as authorities on any of those home questions which are admitted, on all hands, to be full of perplexity, and about which there prevails so great a variety of opinion and practice.

These papers on "Nursery Nurture" are written by one who has been intimately connected with two generations of children. They will be found to contain facts rather than theories; and it will be seen that the writer has had no intention of attempting to exhaust his subject. He speaks only of what he has himself known, and of what he has himself tried, and he offers the experience of his own life as a contribution, to what he conceives to be, the most important branch of social science.

Most, if not all of us, cry as we come into the world. Some go through the world as they came into it. They are allowed by others, and they allow themselves to repeat their first act,

NURSERY NURTURE.

till it has become a confirmed habit, and they remain babies as long as they live. Every excuse is to be made for the first cry of a new-born babe. Many excuses may be made for much of the peevishness of some of the fretful tribe. But there is a great amount of crying amongst babies of all ages which is criminal, and we shall be glad, and every one of our readers will rejoice with us, if anything that we can say will tend to the prevention of this crime.

We frankly confess at the outset, that we fully admit the correctness of the common opinion, "that there is a great difference in children." But a protest may very fairly be made against the custom of avoiding the discussion of the general subject of nursery nurture, or the merits of some particular case, by the utterance of this trite remark. The present topic, with every other bearing upon the management of the young, deserves something better than this summary settlement. "Babies crying" admits and demands investigation. Granted, that there is a great difference in children; then a necessity is laid upon those who have the charge of them, to understand the nature and to discover the reasons of this difference. It does not require much power of observation to discern that a child is crying, but the ear and the eye must be educated before it can distinguish between the cry of pain and the cry of passion. Every one knows that some are "good babies," but this knowledge is without any practical value. We want to know how it is that we may go into some houses and never hear the baby, while we cannot pass others without being aware of its existence. The subject is capable of scientific treatment. Something may be certainly known respecting it. Happy are they who, by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil—who have ears to hear and hearts to understand. Happier are they, who know what it is that can be done for their babies when they cry, and do it.

This matter, as it first presents itself to us, is perfectly free from either pain or perplexity. We have been expecting the cry, and are only too thankful to hear it. We know what it is. It is a sound signifying life. It is merely an animal sound, inseparable from animal life. All young things cry. It is a cry coming only out of the body, if indeed the tender organism deserves such a substantial designation. There is no want of food; so, please, do not give it any. Above all, do not poison this fresh spring of life with medicine. The cry is a cry of relief; and, as you are doubtless too full of feeling to express yourself, let the mouth of the babe and suckling speak for you. The babe wants to breathe. Leave it alone. If you must say something to it, you may begin to tell it, if you like, what you

will have to tell it, times without number, if it lives. "Don't cry, you can do it." If you must do something, sing—

"Tis a lesson you should heed,
 Try, try, try again.
 If at first you don't succeed,
 Try, &c.
 Then your courage should appear ;
 For if you will persevere,
 You will conquer, never fear,
 Try, &c.

The breath and the cry come alike from the same organs. There is a temporary confusion in the exercise of the lungs and the larynx. After a little practice this difficulty will be overcome, except, indeed, the child is going to belong to the class that cannot manage themselves, who are ready to cry whenever they are spoken to, and have tears in their eyes whenever they speak.

There are times, from the first to the last, in this mixed life of ours, when the body will have its own way, and it may, and it must be allowed its liberty. There are times to cry. We are, however, to keep under the body, and to bring it into subjection. There are many tears that may be prevented, and there is much crying that should be stopped. We hold the opinion that if there were better training, there would be more "good babies ;" and if the babies were better, there would, we believe, be more good people.

Let us turn to our new-born babe, and see what can be done. Except it be sickly, if we understand and anticipate its bodily wants—which, by the bye, will involve no small amount of study, patience, and devotion—we shall be able to say, what many have said before us, who have nursed their babes from the birth, "Our children never cry !" The fact will prove that we possess the genius for nursery nurture, at least, so far as the first few months are concerned. If the child be out of health, we admit that the case is altered. There will be special difficulties connected with its management, but these difficulties must be met and mastered. We shall have many a weary day and many a sleepless night, but yet there is something that we can do for the child, and much that we can do for ourselves, by intelligence and submission. Babies' cries differ, and they must receive different treatment. In some instances they are to be met by fun, in others by philosophy. By fun, we mean some harmless flash of humour, which is ever ready to show itself in a holy home ; by philosophy we mean "the wisdom that cometh from above," which we all lack, and which none can receive except it be given by our Father in heaven. The parents of a sick child

must live very near to God, and learn of Him that pity and patience which will be required for its nurture and admonition.

Our healthy babe, however, except the greatest caution be maintained, will imperceptibly acquire a habit of crying. If its wants be misunderstood or neglected it will cry; the cry will be followed by help. It will soon understand this association, and will learn to cry for anything that it wants. We have heard this conduct justified: "What else, poor little thing, can it do? it is its way of asking for what it wants." We do not accept as a home institution, the chronic cry of a healthy babe. Our belief is that crying should be the exception, and not the rule. The babe ought not to be left to cry for anything that it really needs. If it be, then those who have it in charge have failed in their duty; and further (for it is in this way that the child is the father of the man), if the little urchin finds, as it will, that it can obtain anything it cries for, it will discover the power it possesses in making itself disagreeable to others. The babe will have been trained to be tiresome. It is in this way those children are reared whose gifts of teasing seem to be almost supernatural, and are often acknowledged to be beyond human endurance. It is in these crying homes that you may find the birthplaces of those miserable members of society, who are ever troubling others, in order that they may be comfortable themselves.

There is but a step between crying for everything and crying for nothing; the one leads to the other; the force and impetus of the habit are in this direction. Use breeds a fatal facility. Babies' crying may become a vice. We all know the misery of a home where any one of its members has fallen into evil ways. The misery is often greater than it appears. Vicious habits demoralise; they take away the heart; and it is not only the transgressor who suffers; the home is an organism, and all the members suffer with it. The little sinner who has been allowed to fall into the habit of crying for nothing, will not be alone in its iniquity; the other children will only too readily follow the example of selfishness. Even the parents, though they may not choose to acknowledge the fact, or may not, perhaps, be aware of it, are not free from its influence. The difficulty has become a nuisance. Because this iniquity abounds, the love of some fathers has waxed cold. "Babies' crying" has interfered with the home habits of other men besides those who work for their living.

If the first cry of the first child be responded to with alacrity and intelligence, if it be regarded, as indeed it is, as a summons to understand and sustain parental responsibility, nursery nurture will never become invested with insuperable difficulties,

and nursery cries will never be considered a nuisance. The vocation will be received as a call from God, and that power will be sought and obtained by which alone the courage will be maintained in the face of any difficulty, and the temper will be kept under any annoyance.

We shall have occasion once and again in these papers to notice the sphere left for the exercise of humour in the management of children. A laugh will often prevent a cry. It will sometimes stop "babies' crying;" and if it fails in these, it may succeed in accomplishing another and almost as desirable an effect. While it may not work out a way of escape, it will help parents to bear the temptation.

A minister of our acquaintance had a course of wearisome nights appointed to him, during the babyhood of his little girl "Kate," and while aiding and abetting the mother in her attempts to give the first lessons in patience to their child, he was in the habit of trying to keep his own temper by looking at the ludicrous side, which is easily to be found in trifling grievances. The nursery rhyme which follows is now often sung in his home, and was produced by him on the one night of the week when he would have been the most thankful, if his little one had not lifted up her voice. We close our paper with the hope, that his example may stimulate some of our readers, who may be placed in similar circumstances, to go and do likewise.

SATURDAY NIGHT.

Come, come, little Kitty,
 I'll sing you a ditty,
 A ditty, if quiet you'll be;
 I'm sure it's a pity
 Our dear little Kitty,
 To wake your mother and me.

You know it's not right,
 On a Saturday night,
 To make such an awful row.
 Another night, I might strike a light,
 But, to-night, it's out of the question quite,
 Come, hush-a-by, baby, now.

What! keeping up still?
 I know you're not ill!
 What is it all about?
 Be still, be still, or else I will,
 Whether your mother will or nil,
 From the window throw you out

DAVID GRAY AND ROBERT BUCHANAN.

WHEN the uninitiated reader saw advertised a few years back, "The Luggie, and other Poems, by the late David Gray" (with a preface by Monckton Milnes, who was not then, we fancy, Lord Houghton), he probably wondered what the "Luggie" was. Many people, to our certain knowledge, thought it was a caravan of some kind. But most of us have by this time gathered that it is the name of a river; the "native" stream of David Gray, a young Scotchman of marked faculty as a lyric poet, who died young under very saddening circumstances. The *story* of David Gray may now be said to be completed. His father is dead, and David himself has a monument. The *Athenæum* of the 12th of August, 1865, contained these passages, from the pen of Mr. Robert Buchanan, David's intimate friend:—

"David Gray, the young poet of the Luggie, has received the last honour which local sympathy can confer upon him. A monument—the result of subscriptions sent in from all quarters of the land, and from all classes—has been erected over his grave in the Auld Aisle Burying Ground, Merkland, Kirkintilloch. Of the obelisk form, the memorial is composed of the finest white granite, from the Wigton Bay Quarries. The basement consists of three blocks, in which is placed the needle, the height of the whole being eleven feet. Near the top of the needle is sculptured a harp surrounded with a garland of bay-leaves. This is the inscription written by Lord Houghton: 'This Monument of Affection, Admiration, and Regret, is erected to David Gray, the Poet of Merkland, by friends from far and near desirous that his grave should be remembered amid the scenes of his rare genius and early death, and by the Luggie, now numbered with the streams illustrious in Scottish song. Born, 29th January, 1838; Died, 3rd December, 1861.' The monument, from its elevated site, commands an extensive prospect, embracing most of the spots made familiar by the poet's song—the Luggie, the little Bothlin, and the faint blue background of the Campsie hills."

David Gray was the first-born son of a weaver, who lived in a cottage about a mile from Kirkintilloch, and eight miles from Glasgow. He went first to the parish-school of the place, and then to Glasgow University, being "destined" by his parents for the ministry in the Free Church. On the Saturday night he used to come home to Kirkintilloch, and then he would spend his Sunday in Luggieside. Taken in connection with his opportunities of reading, these conditions were not unfavourable for the development of his mind, and, in plain truth, David Gray had a very fair education. Lord Houghton speaks of him as having received the ordinary education of a Scottish artisan; but if every Scottish artisan gets a university training, and the

opportunity of reading "the poets from Chaucer to Tennyson" when he is a lad, Scotland is a very happy land. But David Gray's opportunities, though such as are offered in Scotland to a great many young men, were such as to remove him altogether from the category of poets like John Clare, and such as to make *possible* a question about the originating as distinguished from the imitative power of his mind. There are people who sing, and sing well, taking the hint from those who have sung before them. There are people who would, under any circumstances, have been singers—who would have *begun* the sacred, sweet task of the poet, if there had never been a poet before in all the world. We believe David Gray to have belonged to the latter class; but neither in quantity, nor in superficial quality, is his performance, measured by his opportunities, so large or so overpowering as to prevent the raising of the question. The fact that his mind determined itself, and with passion, to poetry as its special work, is, of itself, indicative of the temperamental *differentia* of the man; and the work he left behind him is genuine work, showing, as Lord Houghton justly says, an "astonishing lyrical faculty;" but it is work which shows traces of favourable poetic culture, and great, even excessive, reading in modern poetry.

David Gray would not be a minister—he *could* not have been one. The whole structure and appearance of the man made it plain to an observer who understood—his father and mother did *not* understand—that he belonged to quite another class of human beings than that from which pulpits are usually filled. He had a poet's eyes, a poet's mouth, and a poet's manner. He was not dogmatic; he was sympathetic, ready, out of *exuberance* of sympathy, to take any side, enter into any and every form of life: quite unfitted to guide and control others; quite unfitted for social intercourse, except by fits and starts which left him his moods, his leisures of fancy—in all things, the opposite of the "pastor" type. He might have preached a telling rhapsody now and then; but he could never have gone in and out among the people. The poet may be a man of the strongest social emotion; but he cannot always be sociable,—cannot always present the most accessible side of his mind to other folks; cannot, at brief warning, collect the *controlling* forces of his nature—all which the pastor of a flock should be able to do. David Gray, however, in his resistance to the plans of his parents for his future, was a great puzzle to them; and it would have been impossible to make them understand that such "plans" have an immense root of selfishness in them. We may have our wishes for our children; but we have no right to seek to control their choice of a path in life, much less have we any

right to resent their unwillingness to be controlled in the choice. No such reflections as these, however, could, by any possibility, have been got into the mind of David Gray's father, who was a simple weaver, with a nature quite decided in its limitations; strong in its direct affections, but without sympathy; a nature with pathetic faults, and capable of causing, or receiving, even tragic pain, without the presence of any wrong such as man may measure.

The remainder of the story of David Gray might, with *very* little help from a knowledge of the facts, be written out in full by any tolerably imaginative person. Scraps of his poetry get into the newspapers. He writes eager letters of appeal to distinguished men in London and elsewhere. He wastes much energy in mad excitement that leads to nothing. At last he rushes up to London, with scarcely anything in his pocket, to try his fortune. And he is not alone—it is no secret that the friend who came up to town at the same time was Mr. Robert Buchanan, whose name is already written in legible characters on the roll of modern poets.

The story of David Gray's very short career has been told by three pens—by Lord Houghton, by Mr. Hedderwick (himself a poet), and more fully still, by Mr. Buchanan himself (in the *Cornhill Magazine* for February, 1864). When he came to London, he slept one night in Hyde-park, and caught a cold which settled on his lungs and eventually killed him. Lord Houghton, to whom he now went personally (having previously written to him from Scotland), told him he was a poet, but bade him go back to Merkland and be a minister. Then came a very short time of struggle with illness and poverty. Lord Houghton was as kind as a father to the lad—kind with his purse, and kind in personal attentions. Mr. Sydney Dobell, too, himself very ill, was incessant in friendly offices such as could be shown at a distance. Of Gray's relations with Mr. Buchanan it can only be said that they must be *guessed* from the paper to which we have just referred: how much of the very essence of real solid friendship there was in them could never be printed, but can easily be inferred from so much as *is* said. The end came soon. David Gray did not get better at Dr. Lane's hydropathic place at Richmond,—he fled, fancying himself a trespasser. Again, he fled from the Sanatorium at Torquay, frightened at the nurses and the circumstantialities of the place. At last he went home to die. His one passion was to see his poem printed. Mr. Dobell took that matter in hand, and Messrs. Macmillan & Co. urged the printing forward. A specimen page reached Kirkintilloch barely in time to be seen by the dying boy. He looked at it; said it was well; and passed. In the *Athenæum*, after some criticisms upon the empty, conventional character of

the ceremony at the uncovering of the monument, Mr. Buchanan continues :—

“ David Gray is left to his sleep, his poems remain in the hearts of the loving circle they have gained. Old David, too, the father of the poet, lies also in his grave. With a strange halo, a confusing wonder, around his simple life, he pined away in the shadow of that son whom he loved with a love transcending that of woman. His last cry was the poet's own plaint, ‘ I am weary.’ That manifestation of the divine faculty, that lurid sorrow which shone upon the face of the dying boy, changed the current of the old man's peaceful days, and thenceforward life was a puzzle which his untaught brain could not solve, an unrest which made the simple round of daily duty meaningless and without joy. The mother lives, a tender, simple-hearted woman, and will be cared for. But now that the two Davids, father and son, are joined once more, the pathos of the homely tragedy is complete, and its abode henceforth is, not in the little weaving cottage, but in the hearts of those who love the singer.”

But those who want to know the best thing that Mr. Buchanan has to say about his departed friend should turn to “ Poet Andrew,” one of the stories in his “ Idylls and Legends of Inverburn.” We may use this particular idyll as a means of introducing the reader to a volume of true poetry which he will learn to love, in spite of some things in it which are weak and some which are faulty. David Gray is gone, but his friend remains, and let us see that we do him large justice. All our neglects of what is beautiful and good are punished eventually in some way which emphasizes the mere loss we incur, and makes us feel that we have done a wrong as well as committed an act of folly. The weaver-father was puzzled with his boy, and half afraid of his gifts :—

“ The lad
Grew up among us, and at seventeen
His hands were genty white, and he was tall,
And slim, and narrow-shouldered : pale of face,
Silent and bashful. Then we first began
To feel how muckle more he knew than we,
To eye his knowledge in a kind of fear,
As folk might look upon a crouching beast,
Bonnie, but like enough to rise and bite.
Up came the cloud between us silly folk
And the young lad that sat among his books
Amid the silence of the night ; and oft
It pained us sore to fancy he would learn
Enough to make him look with shame and scorn
On this old dwelling.”

And, after the poet's death, he has only the dimmest vision of the kind of being his son really was :—

"...And you think weel of Andrew's book? You think
 That folk will love him, for the poetry's sake,
 Many a year to come? We take it kind
 You speak so well of Andrew!—As for me,
 I can make naething of the printed book;
 I am no scholar, sir, as I have said,
 And Mysie there can just read print a wee
 Ay! we are feckless, ignorant of the world!
 And though 'twere joy to have our boy again
 And place him far above our lowly house,
 We like to think of Andrew as he was
 When, dumb and wee, he hung his gold and gems
 Round Mysie's neck; or—as he is this night—
 Lying asleep, his face to heaven—asleep,
 Near to our hearts, as when he was a bairn,
 Without the poetry and human pride
 That came between us, to our grief, langsyne."

But the majority of us have not the unlettered old man's excuses for mistaking a gift that is held out to us. We can understand the symbols made use of by the poet; we know what he is for, and we can enjoy his work. It is impossible that we can enjoy because we ought; but *having* enjoyed poetry like that of Mr. Buchanan in his "Undertones," and in these Idylls, we can remember that such property as we have in the poet's work, has, like other property, its duties as well as its rights. The world was kind to David Gray, and he was profusely grateful—but who can compare the gratitude and the occasions of it without thinking of Wordsworth's pregnant verse:—

"The tears into his eyes were brought,
 And thanks and praises seem'd to run
 So fast out of his heart, I thought
 He never would have done.
 —I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
 With coldness still returning;
 Alas, the gratitude of men
 Has oftener left me mourning!"

But this is moralising—when our only object was to say a few words of David Gray, who is gone, and to invite attention to the poetry of his friend Robert Buchanan.

OFF TO NORWAY.

CHAPTER III.

TRAVEL—EIDSVOLD—MIOSEN LAKE—LILLEHAMMER—CARRIOLES
—SKYDS-KARL—A NORWEGIAN JUDGE.

THE railway from Christiania to Eidsvold, forty miles in length, sometimes through cuttings in the rock, sometimes through woods or forests of fir and pine, whose fragrance in the summer evening is very agreeable, affords the traveller as charming a ride as he can desire. The near country is varied and hilly, and for the most part well cultivated, with plenty of saw-mills on the rivers and streams, and abundant tokens everywhere that deals constitute a large part of the export trade of the country. The grasses and wild-flowers which grow plentifully by the side of the line, and on every bit of soil on the rocky ledges, might make one feel at home, for all the wild-flowers we are accustomed to are found in profusion, and colewort, plantain, clover, harebells, "ragged robin," and "moon-daisies" (here called præste-krave, or priest's cravat, ruff, or frill), and a host of others, made one at times feel that it was all very English. At the different stations children offered small and rather acid currants and wild strawberries in small baskets or trays extemporised from pieces of the bark of the silver birch.

After a ride of rather more than three hours, the scenery became more attractive, and when, about half-past seven, we reached the terminus on the edge of the lake, I heartily congratulated myself on having escaped from the sweltering heat of the city to luxuriate in so delightful a spot. The station comprises numerous and large apartments for the accommodation of travellers, and making the worthy people understand my wants as well as I could, I was shown to a comfortable room, with window opening to the floor of a balcony, which overhung the Miosen lake, and afforded a most charming prospect. The large wooden building itself, like a Swiss chalet, was quite a picturesque object reflected in the waters. The people knew not a word of any language but their own, so that it was a great relief to find a schoolboy home for the holidays—the son of the landlord—who was "learning English," and French, and German, and who, with Carl, a schoolfellow, devoted himself to us most assiduously. The evening was spent on the lake, and in chatting with the father, who brought out all his little curiosities to show us, waiting at

supper with great anxiety to be able to set before us something we could eat; and, as he produced salmon and lobster, one had no difficulty in satisfying him. Here I made trial, for the first time, of the black bread of the country, and felt satisfied to think that, "if the worst came to the worst," I could manage to eat it rather than starve. The honest landlord was loth to say good night, but when, after several ineffectual attempts, I at last succeeded in retiring, he and every member of the family shook me by the hand so vigorously that I verily think none of my former experiences furnished anything like a parallel. Past eleven o'clock I was writing in my room without candles; indeed, I never required them during my stay in the country, and to the end could see to jot down the events of the day at its close.

By seven in the morning, Johan, Carl, and I were off for a ramble, and, as the mists that at first hung heavily over the lake gradually dispersed under the increasing power of the sun, the lifting of the thin silver veil, and its gentle disappearance, revealed a soft and tender loveliness above, below, around, everywhere. One only needed to be filled with grateful love to the Father of all, and to all His creatures, in order to be as happy as ever Adam could have been in Eden. Wordsworth's lines started up in the memory, and the feeling of their truthfulness was deep:—

"Beauty—a living Presence of the Earth,
Surpassing the most fair ideal forms
Which craft of delicate spirits hath composed
From Earth's materials—waits upon my steps,
Pitches her tent before me as I move,
An hourly neighbour."

The boys teaching me a little Norsk, and I them a little English, we strolled up hill to the church, which is said to have been built A.D. 1015, and one can believe it, for a ruder ecclesiastical structure is seldom seen. It was open, and though it was a week-day, three young girls were quietly seated, waiting for the nine o'clock service. They were "going to eat the bread," Johan said. There was a quaint altar-piece, and on the walls a portrait of a bishop, for the painting of which, an inscription informed us, all the people had subscribed. Another painting bore the words, "Thy kingdom come!" Presently, other peasants began to assemble, dressed in their Sunday clothes, "to eat the bread." Their manner was quiet and devout, and a Christian man might very well feel his spirit with their spirit. A very old woman, greatly bowed by age, sitting on a bench outside in the sun, was also waiting for the priest. "She's an old mother," said the boy, and I was glad to be able to say "Gud er hende Fader," not doubtin

that I am as divinely warranted to believe of any poor, old, unknown crone like that, that God is her Father too, as I am to believe it of any English or Scottish divine who thinks he honours Him and conserves a precious truth by maintaining that fatherhood is not so much an original and indefeasible relationship as one that supervenes on some act of the creature's.

At breakfast we had lobster and salmon again, eggs, thin slices, or rather shavings, of two or three kinds of meat, with wheat and rye-bread. My companion tasted the latter, and hastened to the window to spit it out; but subsequently, after two or three weeks' travelling, found it not disagreeable. For my own part, I never ate it, except when it was Hobson's choice, and then as little as would suffice. The Norwegian passengers, on the contrary, who came from England with me, were absolutely pining for black bread, and complained of the unwholesomeness of our English bread, from the use of which they had suffered much inconvenience. The bill for two for supper, breakfast, coffee (never included, nor tea in the charge for breakfast) and bedrooms was one dollar, four marks, twelve skillings.

At half-past three we left by the steamer which plies daily between Eidsvold and Lillehammer, a distance of seventy miles; the latter at the extreme north of the Miosen lake, as Eidsvold is at the south. We were seven hours accomplishing the trip, stopping eight or nine times at very small villages on the shore, once at a little town of some pretensions—Hammer—about midway. The whole scenery of the lake is very charming; steep, rocky mountains (none more than 2,000 feet high) and lowlands varying the nearer prospect, with, of course, interminable forests in the distance. The power of the sun was so great that I was glad to draw over my cap a calico covering, such as is used in India to protect the head and neck from his rays; and for three or four days of subsequent travel this was a great comfort, for in the south and central part of Norway the summer sun is tropically fierce.

The steamer was crowded, and as some of the passengers could speak English, I was able to pick up a good deal of information. The chief engineer, who had been in England for several years, spoke it fluently. A word or two of recognition of the goodness of God served like a freemason's sign, and in the course of the voyage, and on the return, I had a good deal of pleasant intercourse with him. While living in London he had joined a Baptist church, and inquired about Mr. Spurgeon, Mr. Brock, and others of that denomination. I found him a very single-minded and devout Christian, holding his faith perhaps all the more firmly and appreciatively for the religious isolation in which his days were necessarily passed. Dissent has only been allowed in Norway

since the year 1845, when the Storting passed a law of general toleration; but several restrictions are still imposed. The established religion is Episcopal Lutheran, and too well we know that wherever any form of church government and doctrine is adopted and patronized by the State, dissent is sure to be more or less treated as an offence, if not indeed a crime. And the State clergy, as a matter of course, will, as a rule, do their utmost to repress it, and to make the profession of it, which they often regard as a personal affront, a social and economical disadvantage. It is so here at home, notwithstanding the numbers and the respectability and intelligence and political strength of the Nonconformists, to say nothing of their acknowledged services in the diffusion of religion at home and abroad. To this day, though the Congregationalists alone (including both branches, "Baptists" and "Independents") number more than 4,000 churches, with their settled pastors, yet their places of worship are often contemptuously spoken of as "conventicles," and their ministers as "dissenting teachers or preachers;" and the clergy who often zealously seek, especially in country towns and villages, positively to injure persons, when they can, for the "sin of schism" ("greater than that of drunkenness," according to episcopal authority) might be counted, I fear, by thousands. Even from the action of laws still extant the Dissenters of England suffer various injustice and wrong. So that we may easily conceive what has to be endured in a thinly populated country like Norway, if here and there an individual, or a little knot of individuals, venture so to read the Scriptures for themselves as to dissent from the State Church. The baptism of children, I believe, is still compulsory, and "confirmation" has even a political significance. Proselytism is prohibited, except under certain conditions. My friend the engineer, who had bought ground and built himself a house at Eidsvold, had succeeded by conversation and a holy life in influencing some ten or eleven neighbours to seek to be conformed in all things to the will of God and the mind of Christ; and they were in the habit of meeting together for prayer and reading and mutual exhortation, and had even constituted themselves a little "church," claiming the protection of the laws. But his daughter, a girl wanting a few months of seventeen, and of whose piety he spoke gratefully, could not be received into the little society, though she earnestly wished. For the non-established churches are by law prohibited from receiving persons under a certain age. And I am told that the priests are very busy in seeking to make dissent odious and hazardous.

I learned subsequently from many well-informed persons, natives, as well as others long resident in the country, that in

some parts, more especially on the western coast, Wesleyanism is making considerable way ; and, what appears stranger, that the principles of the Society of Friends are favourably regarded, and are spreading. I was sorry to find my engineer friend had imbibed, as something that no devout Christian could question, the very strictest belief on the subject of baptism and communion ; but he was so simple, so good, so tender and devout, that I had not the heart to disturb his peace of mind by suggestions of what I believe the " more excellent way," except indeed by a seed-word or two of catholic import. He so painfully felt the want of Christian countenance and sympathy and help, that, in the little intercourse we should ever have, to have turned from the deepest and most vital truths to any of a quite secondary character would have seemed almost cruel.

I was glad to hear in different quarters, and from very different kinds of persons, that one good effect resulting already from the mere beginnings of Norwegian nonconformity is found in the increased attention of the priests to their duties, and I was told that they " preach better " in consequence.

The Miosen lake is in some parts seven or eight miles across, with large islands here and there, but the average breadth may be from one to two or three miles. We passed one immense timber float, four or five times the length of the steamer, with about four feet of timber beneath the water and two or three feet above. Several groups of men and women were on it, and a builder, who was talking to me, said it was worth more than £2,000. It was on its way to Christiania for exportation.

We arrived at Lillehammer about half-past ten at night, and together with a Danish gentleman whose acquaintance I had made, and who was going to travel for several stages on the same route as myself, walked up the hill to the hotel, the last we should see till we reached Throndhjem, still some 300 miles north.

This journey could only be performed by carriages, hired at the successive " stations," for there are as yet no public conveyances on the great line of road between the present and the ancient capitals of Norway. But Government has done all in its power to facilitate travelling, for at intervals all along the road are found " stations," where the traveller is entitled to horses and carriages at a fixed rate of charge ; he is also to be furnished on demand with food and lodging. And at each station is kept a dag-bog, a day-book, in which every traveller is obliged to state his name, the place he came from, that to which he is proceeding, and the number of horses he requires. There is a broad margin left for any complaints or remarks he may wish to make ; and it was often mortifying to see what a talent some of our

countrymen have for verifying that they belong to that class under which Carlyle (no flatterer) unceremoniously sets down the "thirty millions" of Great Britain—"mostly fools!" These stations are for the most part kept by peasant farmers, who are willing to take the duties and responsibilities with the advantages, being answerable to Government, inspectors making periodical tours. There is a small subsidy to them, and to all the farmers in the district willing to receive it, who are then under obligation to provide horses and vehicles in their turn. At what are called "fast stations" these are to be always ready, day and night; and the master of the "station" has to keep the farmers informed whose turn it is to supply horses. If a traveller is kept waiting, he writes a complaint in the dag-bog. These stations, as far as can be arranged, are about a Norsk mile apart, i.e. about seven English miles; but in the less cultivated and more thinly populated parts the stage is often a mile and a half or three quarters, and even more; but the exact distance is always stated on the sign-board, which teaches the traveller where to stop. On the great main road from Christiania to Throndjhem the stations are nearly all passably good, and some of them are excellent. In the room which the traveller enters to write his name, he will be sure to find one or two beds, but generally there are also other sleeping-rooms he can have if he do not arrive too late. All the rooms and passages will be found sprinkled over with the tops of fir and juniper, used as sand was in many of our houses before carpets were common, and a very pleasant fragrant effect is thus produced. Often even the bed-rooms are thus supplied.

The traveller, if himself courteous, will never have to complain of incivility, but will find the people at the stations ready, though in their own marvellously unhurrying way, to promote his comfort to the best of their ability. If he be frank and social, and ready to take pleasantly what comes, he will at once establish himself on a good footing; but he must not expect the obsequiousness he is accustomed to at home from those whose civility is considerably regulated by pecuniary expectations. Over and over again on driving into the station-yard, with a dozen men and boys standing about apparently doing nothing, not one of them stirred a step. They look at you with an air of stolid indifference, lazily exchange observations with one another; the dogs crowd round the carriage, barking furiously, but no one restrains them, and the inexperienced traveller is annoyed. But he soon learns how to manage. He takes no notice of the dogs, though they seem ready to tear him in pieces, jumps down from his carriage, sings out for another horse, begins to unstrap his luggage, looks round the, in general, three sides of the square of

houses and outhouses—all detached—for the one which is most likely to be the room he wants, enters his name in the book, and coming out finds that the man or boy whose duty it was is bringing the horse. Unless he has his own carriage he has to get another at the station, and a little experience makes him quick in looking out for the best of those that happen to be there. A boy or man—*skydskarl*—goes with him to bring the horse back. If it be a busy time, a mere child is sometimes sent, and once I had a little black-eyed, barefooted girl of ten.

That particular stage, too, happened to abound in sharp, steep hills, and the harness, seldom good, was the very worst I had to put up with in all the trip. The reins were, as was common, of mere string, such as schoolboys use in "playing at horses." In this case it was worn and ragged and full of joins. But the worst of it was that the fastenings which connected the horse and the vehicle were as flimsy, and broke no fewer than four times in that short stage, when, if I had not instantly stopped the horse, I might have come to grief. But the little Norwegian horses are very docile, and are taught to obey the voice quite as much as the reins. A certain peculiar sound will stop them in an instant, even going down a steep hill at full speed. Being aware of this I early acquired the art, and finding it never to fail, was quite easy as to the character of the harness, knowing I could stop the animal under any circumstances. For want of something better, we were obliged to mend the harness in this instance with bits of twig cut from the bush, which, of course, soon gave way again.

The carriage, which holds but one person, is unlike any vehicle we have at home. The traveller sits with his legs extended as in a sledge, which it somewhat resembles, the seat none too large, and made to fit, being but a few inches from the bed, which is kept as narrow as possible, perhaps not more than a couple of hand-breadths wide. When tired of keeping the legs extended, he may hang them down one on each side, or rest them on a front bar; or in some cases a sort of iron stirrup is provided, so that one sits as if on horseback. The carriage has no springs, but the body of it is so placed, at the end of very long, thin shafts, and a little in advance of the wheels, that springs can be dispensed with. A small narrow board behind serves to receive a valise or knapsack, which you strap on, and on this the *skydskarl* manages also to stand, or kneel, or crouch as best he can. If the traveller be at all fastidious, the close contiguity of the *karl* is not always agreeable. One huge hulking fellow evidently had a theory of his own about the intercommunication of foreigners, for finding I could not make head or tail of his *hafsh*

northern guttural dialect (it was up in the North), he being close behind me, brought his big mouth close to my cheek, and throwing all his strength into his voice, shouted at its fullest pitch into my ear the questions he wanted me to answer, such as, Had I come to Norway to fish? and the like. The fellow almost deafened me, and as he had been plainly living upon onions for some time past, and was, moreover, no Mahometan in the matter of ablutions, his attentions did not enhance the pleasure of the ride. Another time a gentleman, who chanced to be my fellow-traveller for the day, called out to me, "What sort of a boy have you? my fellow is covered with lice!" From that time I always managed, when I could, to get rid of the boy. And if three or four travellers happen to be starting from a "station" together, one lad or man is enough to bring back all the horses; in which case I used to drive off without giving the *karl* the chance of jumping up behind.

Speaking about the *skydskarl* reminds me of the only instance of dishonesty I met with in the country. When unstrapping my luggage one day I missed some very nice leather straps, London made, with spring-hooks, &c.; and as I had secured them myself at the last station, my companion at once suspected the *karl*, and shook him vigorously, questioning him angrily in English. The barefooted urchin protested his innocence, and I believed him; but just as I was driving off, a Norwegian gentleman and two sons, who had been travelling the same way with us for some days, and with whom I had become acquainted, drove into the yard, to whom I mentioned the loss of the straps. Two or three hours afterwards, when I was dining at another station, this gentleman came into the room in delighted excitement, and forthwith produced the straps, and was voluble in explanation, which, alas! was perfectly unintelligible to me. Suddenly he asked if I could read Latin, and on my answer, immediately tore a leaf out of his pocket-book, and wrote the following, which I give exactly:

"Latine.

*Desiderata vincula apud puerum suspectum
inquisitione et scrutatione inveni, et furtem
stante pede et manu mea propria castigavi.*

T. Ericson,

Judex Norvegicus."

"6. 8. 65."

For several subsequent days this "judge" and his two sons were more or less my companions; and when by-and-by he

reached his home—a fine mansion in a well-wooded and park-like district—and we took leave of each other, he ventured on the only bit of English he knew, and heartily shaking hands with me, said fervently, “God bless you!” which I found as suggestive as pleasant.

(*To be continued.*)

LONDON CHURCHES AND CHAPELS.

WE wish to draw attention to the valuable report published by the *Nonconformist* of November 15th, on the Statistics of Religious Worship in the Metropolis. And as there are obvious advantages in knowing how such things strike the mind of some who stand outside the circle of operation, we think our readers may be glad to see what is said by the *Examiner*; one of the very ablest and most trust-worthy of our papers, and characterized generally by sound judgment and an anxiety to be perfectly fair towards all parties. We need, perhaps, scarcely say that for ourselves we might wish somewhat to modify the ruling as to the comparative value of objective truth and subjective conception. But we rejoice that a paper like the *Examiner* can thus appreciate the worth of the humblest modes of Christian effort:—

“The *Nonconformist* of Wednesday has an interesting supplement, containing carefully compiled Statistics of Religious Worship in the metropolis. We quote from it a couple of tables, showing the relative activity and growth of the different denominations. The most noticeable facts in them are the activity of the Roman Catholics in providing church accommodation; and the rapid spread of Methodism as the form of religion most readily grasped by the ignorant and poor.

“The number of places of worship belonging to the eleven principal denominations, for 1851 and 1865 respectively, is as follows:

	1851.	1865.		1851.	1865.
Church of England	458	- 543	Primitive Methodists	21	- 43
Congregationalists	161	- 174	Church of Scotland	5	- 6
Baptists	130	- 173	English Presbyterians	14	- 17
Wesleyans	98	- 96	United Presbyterians	4	- 6
U. Methodist Free Ch.	26	- 42	Roman Catholics	35	- 47
Methodist New Con-					
nexion	5	- 21			

"The following is the provision made respectively by these bodies :

	1851. Sittings.	1865. Sittings.	Increase since 1851.	Increase per cent.
Church of England	409,834	512,067	102,233	25
Congregationalists	100,436	130,611	30,175	30
Baptists	54,234	87,559	33,325	61
Wealeys	44,162	52,454	8,292	19
U. Methodist Free Churches . .	4,858	13,422	8,564	176
Methodist New Connexion . .	984	6,667	5,683	577
Primitive Methodists	3,380	9,230	5,850	173
Church of Scotland	3,886	5,116	1,250	32
English Presbyterians	10,065	12,952	2,887	28
United Presbyterians	4,280	4,860	580	13
Roman Catholics	18,230	31,100	12,870	70

"Many of the places of worship assigned to the Methodists in these tables are rented rooms ; but the sense of earnest reality given by the hot zeal of the preachers, who are instant in season and out of season, the bond of sympathy between ignorant hearers and preachers almost as ignorant as themselves, yet inspired and exalted by the strength of convictions that bring near to them spiritual truths as wild material realities, glorify their rooms into cathedrals. The religion of those who succeed best is a coarse mediæval melodrama, but if they give their souls to it in fervent aspiration, it may bring our poor at once nearer to God than the wisdom of the wise could lift them by an effort maintained during many generations. No sect has a monopoly of heaven. We all colour spiritual truth with the various stains of the glass through which we see it darkly. It matters, we suspect, far less what men see through that glass than how they are affected by the sight of it. If it make them labour heart and soul to the best of their poor knowledge to serve God with whatever talent is committed to them, they have seen what it it was good for them to see."

WESTHAMPTON CHURCH RECORDS.

IN SEARCH OF A PASTOR.

PART IV.

Dr. Williams's letter introducing Mr. Fenton was not the only one which the Westhampton deacons had to consider at their New Year's meeting. The Rev Mr. Singleton had also recommended, through his friend Mr. Ramsden, a Mr. Coulter, a young man who had been engaged as his assistant for two years, of whose piety and attainments he had had every opportunity of forming a correct estimate, and who was in his judgment the very man Westhampton wanted. A worthy Scotch minister of the neighbourhood, Mr. Cameron, had also written to mention to the deacons a young friend of his, who had taken his degree at Edinburgh, and had subsequently been attending the Theological Hall of the Free Church, but who had become enlightened as to the Scriptural authority of Independency, and was of course anxious to find a desirable sphere of labour in the South, a kind of treasure for whom there was sure to be a great amount of competition as soon as his real worth was known, and whom, therefore the Westhampton deacons would do well to secure with as little delay as possible. To judge by these letters there could be no difficulty in the vacant church finding a suitable pastor. The only misfortune was, that of three such eligible men it was only possible for them to have one, while it appeared that even among the deacons themselves each one had his partizan, who though he knew little or nothing of his favourite candidate, was prepared to champion his cause with a zeal which, if not very enlightened, was at all events sufficiently determined.

Of course Mr. Ramsden, who was not a little flattered by the notice of the great London preacher, was quite prepared to espouse the cause of his protégée. "Consider," he said, "the immense advantages a man must have had from having been associated with one so thoroughly sound in doctrine, so able in his church administration, and so remarkably successful as Mr. Singleton. The opportunities he must have had for gaining an acquaintance with men and things, and for observing various modes of organisation, and the benefit he cannot fail to have derived from the influence and example of so popular a preacher, and from contact with a church so zealous and active, are in themselves quite sufficient recommendations. I believe we shall make a great mistake if we do not at once send for Mr. Coulter, who, I have little doubt, will prove to be the very man we need."

"For my part," said Mr. Rowntree, "I take a different view. I do not much like London men, who are generally too finical, too conceited, too genteel, for a population like ours." "Yes," said Mr. Ramsden, "but this cannot be the case with one who has been connected with Mr. Singleton. He is a man of a very different stamp; one who is quite above all petty conventionalities, whose earnestness is manifested as much out of the pulpit as in it, who is always intent on doing good, and has especially shown himself the friend of the working-man."

"About that, too," said Mr. Rowntree, "there are two opinions. Mr. Singleton, I must confess, was never a great favourite of mine. His preaching is undoubtedly effective, but a great deal too superficial and showy for my taste. Even his efforts for the working-men have about them too much of ostentation, and are marked by a patronising air which takes away a great deal from their real value or effect. Besides, Mr. Coulter is not Mr. Singleton, and I am not much disposed to believe, that the curate of a fashionable London congregation is very likely to have the strength necessary to win his way with the somewhat rough and ready, but clear-headed artizans of our own town. I would rather attend to Mr. Cameron's recommendation. These Scotchmen are generally shrewd, sagacious, hard-working men, who possess the qualifications essential to success in such an age and district as ours."

"Well," said Mr. Simmons, "I do not feel myself drawn to Scotchmen, and especially have I no predilection for those who have been educated in Presbyterian notions, and are not likely easily to fall into our ideas and modes of action. I think, indeed, that we have already got Scotchmen enough round about us. They may be very orthodox, argumentative, and forcible preachers, but they are certainly very slow, and generally extremely cold and unsympathizing. I attach great weight, too, to Dr. Williams's opinion. He knows us well, and has always been deeply interested in our prosperity, and as he speaks so favourably of Mr. Fenton I vote that we give him a trial."

Both Mr. Ramsden and Mr. Rowntree at once joined to combat poor Mr. Simmons, but each was so bent on maintaining his own opinion, that the war of words between them was threatening to become hot and fierce, when quiet Mr. Simmons ventured the suggestion that the best plan would be to invite the three to preach a Sunday each, and then decide upon their respective merits, an idea in which they at once professed their concurrence. Mr. Percy had hitherto remained perfectly silent. He was not much prepossessed in favour of any of them, and had listened with not a little quiet amusement to the earnest way in which their claims had been urged by their respective advo-

cates. He felt, however, that now he was bound to speak. "I fear," he said, "that we are about to commit a great mistake, and to sow the seeds of disunion in a church which has hitherto been extremely harmonious. I never knew such an experiment as is now proposed tried without the result being disastrous. There are, of course, many varieties of taste, opinion, and culture in the church, and almost any man is sure to enlist some supporters in his favour. If, then, we introduce three different preachers we are pretty sure to have three parties, each as zealous and enthusiastic as our friends here to-night, and in the end we shall be compelled to give up all and commence our work *de novo*, only with feelings greatly embittered, and possibly with some painful memories which it will not be easy to obliterate. Then it does not appear to me that we know sufficient of any of the gentlemen in question to warrant us in taking so decided a step. It is true that an invitation to preach is a very different thing from a call to the pastorate, but if any candidate should succeed, as is not improbable, in securing the sympathies of a considerable party, we might afterwards find it extremely difficult to prevent a settlement, even though to ourselves, and all the more thoughtful members of the church, it might appear eminently undesirable. I would suggest, therefore, that we cannot be too cautious in relation to these preliminary steps. Impatient spirits may complain that we are too slow, but though I am as anxious as the most earnest of them, I have not forgotten the old proverb, which warns us that there may be more haste than good speed. Let us, at all events, institute more careful inquiry before we commit ourselves. I would not disparage the worthy ministers by whom they have been introduced, but I know that personal feelings must necessarily operate in all such cases; that strong friendship must, even though unconsciously, bias the judgment; that ministers and hearers look at ministerial qualifications from different points of view; and that, at least, no harm can be done by suspending action (it need not be for more than a short time) until we have satisfied ourselves by other means as to the efficiency of these parties."

But it was in vain that observations, evidently containing in themselves so much good sense, were addressed to men already strongly biassed in favour of a particular course. They argued that too much time had already been wasted, and that if the deacons did not show that they were really doing something, considerable dissatisfaction would arise, and that instead of its being undesirable that there should be a plurality of candidates, it was quite necessary that the people should have the full opportunity of hearing different styles of preaching, and of judging between them. Even Mr. Wright, who generally in

clined to Mr. Percy's side, took the opposite view on the present occasion, and expressed himself very decidedly in favour of immediate action. The result was that Mr. Rowntree was requested, as secretary, to make arrangements for a visit from each of the three, with as little delay as practicable. Mr. Percy deeply regretted the determination, but he felt that nothing was left for him, after the disregard of his remonstrances, but silent acquiescence.

Mr. Fenton was the first with whom an arrangement was made, and in due course he arrived to fulfil his appointment. There was not a little excitement among the people, who were sincerely desirous to see the pulpit filled again, and who, having been given to understand that the preacher might be regarded as a candidate, looked forward somewhat hopefully to his advent. His first appearance, as he ascended the pulpit stairs, was decidedly prepossessing to all but the few who look distrustfully at everything at all resembling priestly assumption, and fancy that it generally covers intellectual and spiritual feebleness. Certainly, in dress, gait, and general style, Mr. Fenton was unexceptionable; there was the requisite amount of becoming and solemn dignity in his tread; his whole bearing proclaimed that he thoroughly understood, and would not fail to do, the "correct thing." The same characteristic were observable in his announcement of the opening hymn. Not unfrequently, indeed, does the mode in which this part of the service is conducted afford a very true index as to the tone of the entire service. It is melancholy to hear the wretched perfunctory style in which some ministers will read out words, which in themselves are most solemn and impressive, perhaps in a poor, miserable sing-song, which would be discreditable in a schoolboy—perhaps in a sort of singular recitative, most unnatural, and therefore unpleasant—perhaps with a careless rapidity, which indicates how little importance the preacher attaches to this portion of his duties. There are comparatively few men who seem to understand the power that may be in the simple, unaffected reading of a touching hymn—how, as George Herbert says, "a verse may catch him who a sermon flies." Hence the inattention to what seems a small point, but is really one of considerable importance. Mr. Fenton was not a careless, flippant reader, but he had other faults which are almost as bad. He was pompous and unnatural; his pronunciation was faultless, his emphasis carefully studied, and generally rightly placed; but there was an apparent lack of heart which took away all the effect. There was nothing more attractive in his reading of the Scriptures. Their most glorious utterances were read with precision and clearness, but without anything of soul, and with a great deal of ostentatious display. His prayer was

long, elaborate, and formal. It contained some very grandiloquent phrases about the Divine Majesty and attributes—a recital of all the articles of his creed—a number of unctuous expressions which are familiar to all accustomed to a class of prayers which are extemporaneous only in name—but was altogether destitute of lofty spiritual aspiration or devout earnestness of soul.

It was not difficult from these preliminaries to judge what the sermon would be. It was a thoroughly orthodox production, alike in structure, doctrine, and phraseology. There were the three heads, which could easily be adapted to any number of sermons, and each including under itself a number of subdivisions. We need not name the text, for the sermon was not so much derived from it as it was made to suit the sermon. Mr. Fenton was evidently well skilled in a certain style of systematic theology, and instead of attempting to expound Scripture, and bring the ever-living truth which is in its words to bear upon the circumstances of his hearers, sought only to insist upon the peculiarities of his system. He had a firm belief in the notion that it was his first duty to introduce "the three R.'s" into every sermon, whether the text naturally led to them or not. Hence some people were malicious enough to say that those who had heard one of his sermons had heard all. That which he preached at Westhampton was one that had been carefully prepared, and had often done duty before. Perhaps, like good port, it had rather improved by age, but if it had acquired any mellowness it had assuredly lost whatever spirit it might once have possessed. However he was thoroughly familiar with its every turn of thought and shade of expression. It was what some people call a very Scriptural sermon—that is, a large number of passages of Scripture were cited as proofs of his propositions, many of which, however, would hardly have passed muster with one who observed the strict rules of logic, or who was at all acquainted with the exact meaning of the original. Of original thought and earnest feeling, of power to touch the hearts and consciences of men, there was not the slightest trace. In fact, if truth must be told, the good man's matter and manner had rather a somnolent tendency. Some there were, indeed, who listened with great interest, and who fancied that a man who crammed so many theological notions into one sermon must necessarily be a very sound divine, but amongst others, especially amongst the more juvenile members of the congregation, there were many signs of inattention. Mr. Percy and others of his class listened, but there was little to meet their real wants. In short, as a whole, the discourse fell very tame and flat, and there were not many who

were very sorry when the fifty minutes were past, and the preacher's book was closed.

Of course there was not a little discussion about Mr. Fenton and his sermon. His admirers were in ecstasies. This was none of your new-fangled preaching, but good sound stuff, the old doctrine of which some are so shy in these times, but which could not fail to be profitable to any right-minded congregation. Indeed, so earnest were they, that they were half inclined to suspect of heterodoxy any who had formed a different estimate from themselves. Men of this character appear to be destitute of all power to appreciate the difficulties or understand the taste of minds, especially among the younger part of the community, which have been influenced by the literature of the times, which are active and inquiring, and need something of a very different character to attract and convince them. They demand not only that the truth should be preached, but that it should be preached in the time-honoured forms to which they have been accustomed, and in language which we fear often comes to be conventional and artificial; and they are greatly shocked when they find others speaking sometimes strongly and decidedly in opposition to that which recommends itself so much to their own tastes. Hence, when others complained that Mr. Fenton was a dull proser, and expressed themselves rather sarcastically about some parts of his discourse, his friends were ready to set them down as heretics who were displeased with the simple truths of the Gospel. Mr. Percy said nothing, and in answer to every appeal to him only replied that it had been determined to hear three preachers, and he should reserve his opinion until all had been heard. It was soon manifest, however, that notwithstanding Dr. Williams's high testimonial Mr. Fenton would not be the choice of the Westhampton Church. In his own secret thought, Mr. Percy was rather puzzled to comprehend how the good doctor could have been led to express so favourable an opinion.

On the next Sunday Mr. Coulter occupied the pulpit. A more perfect contrast it would not be easy to imagine. It did not take long to discover that he belonged to the "sensational" school. There was something unusual and striking, if not very attractive, in his appearance. His long hair was parted down the middle, and thrown back with great art so as to give an air of great saintliness and devotion. His voice was not unmusical, and it was managed with so much skill that his very announcement of the hymn was calculated to produce an effect on superficial minds. He had selected one not ordinarily sung, and which, in its character, was hardly suited for general congregational worship. The preacher's intention evidently was to produce from the first a state of high-wrought religious excitement;

but to those who were at all familiar with Mr. Singleton's style, the effect was to a large extent destroyed by the fact that there was so palpable an imitation of his attitude, his manner, the very tones of his voice, that an artificial air was thus given to the whole. The prayer still further confirmed this impression. It was certainly not cold and lifeless, but there was an evident straining after effect, which took away its simplicity and its force. Impassioned ejaculations, excessive minuteness of detail, the utter want of all repose, interfered with the sense of reverence and devotion, while the more thoughtful did not fail to note that in these things there was an exaggerated representation of some of Mr. Singleton's worst defects. The sermon was, to say the least, peculiar. There was no attempt at anything like order or arrangement, the thought was loose and disjointed, the exposition of Scripture was hardly attempted, and, indeed, the peculiar mode in which some texts that came under review were treated did not make the hearers desire a larger introduction of this element. It was full of illustrations, which were lavishly used without any special regard to their relevance or beauty. They were all of them extremely homely, occasionally bordering even on coarseness and irreverence, and not unfrequently producing a hardly-suppressed titter among the congregation. Thus, to take one example, the want of zeal and self-sacrifice of many professors towards their Lord, was set forth by a figure borrowed from the dinner-table, the preacher expressing his belief that if Jesus were to visit their home, they would not provide him with anything better than a cold shoulder of mutton. There are those who think this kind of preaching clever and original; it is certainly novel, and foolish people at once leap to the conclusion that it must therefore be good. They little calculate the effect which is produced on the minds of men of refined taste, already quite sufficiently disposed to treat the Gospel with indifference—they confound eccentricity with genius, and vulgarity with plainness of speech, and they appear to have misread the Apostle's words, and to mistake the preaching of foolishness for the "foolishness of preaching." Unhappily this sort of thing has been spreading of late, and Mr. Coulter was one of the men who had been caught by it. He had heard Mr. Singleton break out into flights of this kind, which, however, in his case, were always redeemed by the marks of undoubted genius. He had marked his great success, he was an intense admirer of his character and power, and he fancied he had only to copy some of the little mannerisms which in reality were his failings, to acquire a similar reputation. He forgot that in the absence of the inspiring genius, which gave dignity, life, and force to what else would have been low and unworthy, that which in his friend was admirable

would sink into the contemptible, and so by a step proverbially easy, he passed from the sublime to the ridiculous. Generally, indeed, he found some admirers wherever he went, but they were not among the class whose approbation a wise man is anxious to obtain. It was the same at Westhampton. All the more grave and thoughtful part of the congregation disapproved of his exhibition, even Mr. Ramsden, his first advocate, frankly confessing that he had been mistaken. But there were others among the uneducated and impulsive who thought it the very perfection of preaching, and were desirous that he should be at once invited to the pastorate, and it soon became evident that it would not be easy to deal with the strong feeling which had thus been excited.

To be continued.

MR. GLADSTONE AND THE DISSENTERS.*

WITH the new year, commences a new political era, in which Mr. Gladstone seems destined to play a prominent part. The death of Lord Palmerston necessarily terminates that period of transition and inactivity which had already almost run itself out, and which, even if he had lived, could not have lasted much longer. There is wisdom and right feeling in the old proverb "*De mortuis nil nisi bonum*," and we are certainly not disposed to violate it, while the grave has hardly closed over the aged Premier, who has so long occupied the foremost rank among our statesmen.

Lord Palmerston was certainly not our ideal of a liberal statesman, but we are ready to admit that he rendered a service to the Liberal cause, which one of more pronounced opinions could not have accomplished. Despite the result of the recent elections, we do not see how it can be denied that, during the early period of the American war, there was a strong Conservative reaction, which manifested itself both in and out of Parliament, and which would have rendered it impossible for any thoroughly progressive statesman to have held power. Lord Palmerston was just the man for the time. He saved the country from falling into the hands of a party which would very speedily have involved us in a war with America; he secured for us the benefits of Mr. Glad-

* The Right Honourable Wm. Ewart Gladstone, M.P. A Political Review. By R. Masheder, B.A. London: Saunders, Otley, & Co.

stone's marvellous financial administration, and so he enabled us to tide over, with as little inconvenience as possible, a period of considerable difficulty and peril to the popular cause. Happily, that time has passed; men are beginning to be ashamed of their absurd fears of American institutions; and though Mr. Adderley, Mr. Seymour Fitzgerald, and others of that ilk, still attempt in their post-prandial orations, to alarm the country with the bugaboo of Republicanism, their words fall flat and powerless. The disappointment of those sinister predictions as to the American Republic, which asserted that it could only be saved from utter destruction by lapsing into a military despotism, has not been without its effect. The recent elections have shown that Liberal principles are in the ascendant; the halt is over, and the time for decided advance is come. For the active stirring contests on which we are about to enter, Lord Palmerston was not the man. He was too much bound up with the traditions of the past—too well satisfied with a state of things which seemed to secure for him undisputed supremacy,—too much, in fact, under the Conservative influences of age and association to have thrown himself heartily into an aggressive movement; and even had he been able to hold his old place a little longer, his lead would have been endured, rather than cheerfully followed by the more advanced members of his own party. He died, therefore, at a fortunate period for his own fame, and for the interests of the Liberal party, whose eyes now turn anxiously to the successor, who is to stand in the fore-front of the coming battle.

Of course, about a man so conspicuous as Mr. Gladstone, and especially about one whose career has been of so thoroughly abnormal a character, who has broken loose from all the trammels of education and early association, and has carved out for himself an independent position by the sheer force of his own genius, there is an almost endless diversity of opinion. Tories hate him, because in him, with one of the keenest intellects of the time, they see how far the active thought of the age has overleaped the narrow barriers within which they would fain confine it, and how unable they are to retain in their ranks men of vigorous and independent mind, even though they may have been trained in the traditions of the strictest of their sects. Genuine Whigs of the old true-blue stamp, whose association with the popular party is the accident of birth rather than the result of conviction, do not regard him with much more favour. They are compelled to tolerate one without whose help it would be impossible for them to secure that high official *status* which they consider due to their high descent and the eminent services rendered by their ancestors, if not by themselves, to the cause of freedom; but they do not relish the idea of following a leader who has been educated

beyond the charmed circle of the great families, who looks at questions in their bearings upon national rather than Whiggish interests, who is little disposed to pay any regard to the conventionalism and traditions of party, and who is sometimes so bold and daring in his policy as to alarm all who have more faith in expediency than in principle. All of this class of men profess to be anxious about his conduct as leader of the House; they tell us of his indiscretions, his irritable temper, his want of tact; they compare him with his predecessors, and then they shrug their shoulders and look unutterable things, as though Mr. Gladstone were another Phaeton, madly taking a position to which he is unequal, and in which he will only work out his own destruction. If, however, such a fate be in store for him, it is certain at least, we may say in passing, that it will not be owing to the fiery character of the steeds which he has to manage.

But if neither of the old parties in the State is disposed to give its confidence to Mr. Gladstone, there are numbers who have watched his career with intense interest, who have rejoiced to see his gradual emancipation from the traditions of the fathers, and his growing adaptation to the necessities of a progressive age, and who have learned year by year more sincerely to admire his transcendent genius, his superiority to mere routine, his high statesmanlike qualities, and, above all, his evident sincerity and unbending principle. It is somewhat remarkable that a politician who made his entrance into public life under the auspices of that famous Duke of Newcastle who was resolved to do as he would with his own, and to deal with the voters as he would with the cattle on his estate—who at first distinguished himself by his extreme Tory opinions, and was regarded by all the champions of the old *regime* as a young Paladin who was to take the banner then falling from the hands of that honest and sturdy old bigot, Sir Robert Inglis, and do manly battle on its behalf—should now be the hope of the popular party, dreaded and hated by all interested in the maintenance of old abuses, and looked up to with confidence by the great majority of those who are intent on the fuller development both of our civil and religious liberties. To some the question naturally suggests itself—Can so complete a change be genuine, and has it been made in perfect good faith? Is Mr. Gladstone worthy of that implicit and unquestioning trust which some are determined to repose in him? Especially are there some Dissenters who are inclined to indulge in such scepticism. They cannot forget his antecedents; his association with a party that favours high ecclesiastical pretensions; his zealous advocacy of extreme principles as to the relations of the Church and

State in his celebrated volume;—his indisposition, so frequently shown, to concede anything to Nonconformists. They remind us how up to the present time he has resisted the abolition of Church-rates, how jealously he has guarded the monopoly of Oxford and Cambridge; how Dr. Pusey and others of the same school still regard him as their most powerful champion, and they ridicule the notion that such a man will do any service to the cause of religious liberty, or concede any of the just demands of Protestant Dissenters. The question is one of considerable importance, for though the ultimate triumph of our principles is independent of any man or class of men, yet considerable present injury might be inflicted by one who, while standing at the head of the Liberal party and zealous enough for commercial and even political progress, should resolutely oppose himself to all advances in the direction of religious equality. Were a misplaced confidence on our part to exalt such a man to a position of influence which independent of the help of Nonconformists it would be impossible for him to attain, we might for years to come have reason to repent our folly. We think it well, therefore, to look somewhat thoughtfully at the subject, and to indicate the grounds on which it appears to us that Dissenters should view Mr. Gladstone with a generous trust, rather than with a jealous suspicion.

In the first place, we rest much on the fact that Mr. Gladstone is a conscientious man, intently anxious to see and do the right. There is in his mind a love of subtle speculations, which disposes him to over-refinement, and not unfrequently leads him wrong; but however his judgment may be warped, he is always true to his own convictions. His most bitter opponents can hardly insinuate that his change of political opinions is owing to any selfish motive, for it cannot be questioned that he might have obtained the lead of the Tory party with infinitely more ease than he has won his present position. Touchy, irritable, strongly influenced by personal likes and dislikes, rash and impulsive they may say he is, and may even find some warrant for most of their allegations, but insincere, tricky, self-seeking they cannot charge him with being. Mr. Masheder—Mr. Gladstone's most severe critic, who has dipped his pen in gall, while preparing an indictment into which he has crowded every charge which it was possible to bring against him—never attempts to impugn his sincerity. He complains bitterly of his "ambiguous relations" to the Conservative party, and of the injurious influence which he has exerted on its fortunes; he charges him with having betrayed his constituencies, and especially that of the University of Oxford;—forgetting that his changes, even on his own showing, have been gradual; that in

the first instance Oxford elected him as a free-trader, that his frequent re-elections showed that up to a certain point his constituency were prepared to condone if not to approve his Liberal tendencies, and that even to the last, the University itself never withdrew from him its confidence;—he talks loudly about his “eccentric foibles and audacious freaks,” his “crooked courses,” his “self-confidence,” and his “outrage upon political morality;” he accuses him just as Sokrates was accused of old, of setting an example “which has a tendency direct and immediate to corrupt the minds of young men;” but still he hesitates to question his motives; indeed he tells us, “as to his character I mean, of course, politically, Mr. Gladstone appears to me a moral chaos. His principles I believe to be thoroughly honourable and conscientious, and—never to be trusted.” This is one of the qualities which inspire us with hope in Mr. Gladstone. A mere time-server, who is incapable of taking any broad and enlarged view, who avows his contempt for abstract propositions, and his care for what are called “practical” measures, is never very likely to look favourably on the demands of Protestant Dissenters. Though he may attach little value to religious opinions and institutions himself, and his attachment to the Established Church may be little more than a preference for the most fashionable and easy form of religion-going, or one of those great institutions of the country with which, from pure Conservative instinct, he does not wish to meddle; yet there is no one whose opposition to every innovation is more resolute. Dissenters are, in his view, mere fanatics, who make “much ado about nothing,” a set of radicals and levellers, who only bore men indifferent to mere crotchets and intent on the real progress of the country. Probably he would desire to make the National Church more comprehensive, or to speak more correctly, latitudinarian; he would, if it were possible, abolish all dogmatic tests and distinctions; he would accommodate himself to the “Liberal” notions of the “advanced” school, and make the Church by law, as she already is in fact, the home and refuge of every shade of unbelief. But as to respecting the scruples of conscientious men, it would be utterly beyond his power, if for no other reason, because he is utterly without the capacity to understand them. Very different is it with Mr. Gladstone. Influenced mainly by strong religious convictions himself, he is capable of appreciating the opinions of others, and is disposed to judge all questions by considerations of high principle, and not by those of mere convenience or expediency. To such a man we can appeal on very different grounds from those which would have weight with a mere politician, and surely we have sufficient faith in our own principles to believe that they will commend themselves to the calm and dispassionate

judgment of so clear an intellect and so earnest a heart as that of Mr. Gladstone. It is true that in one respect this is our most formidable difficulty. He will concede nothing to mere political considerations. We believe that he would rather sacrifice all his hopes of political greatness than purchase support by the compromise of one iota of the principles to which he is conscientiously attached. What he concedes, he will do as the result of intelligent and honest conviction, and this conviction we must earnestly seek to produce.

His mind is certainly not obstinately closed against all impression. We are not to be scared from doing the right by the absurd notion that reform and revolution, liberty and licentiousness, are convertible terms, and that every little concession is only the opening of a floodgate through which the full tide of innovation will rush. He is not even one to be greatly alarmed by Mr. Masheder's terrible pictures of the evils to be apprehended from dissent or democracy, or to suppose that the fate of the Crown and the Constitution is dependent upon the maintenance of an ecclesiastical monopoly. He is capable of looking at the whole question from a purely religious point of view, of estimating the effect of state patronage upon the clergy and upon the people to whom they minister, of appreciating the scruples of Dissenters, and honouring them for their loyalty to truth, and of applying to the subject the only tests by which it can be fairly judged. Such a man may indeed be difficult to move; his own prepossessions and opinions are doubtless very strong, and it would not be pleasant for him to admit the idea that they may have been resting on a foundation radically unsound. But it is infinitely better to deal with one of this tone of mind, to whom the interests of religious truth are more precious than any mere political considerations, than with one who is incapable of rising to this high level, and who would jealously guard an ecclesiastical monopoly so long as it suited the convenience of himself and his party, dealing with it, in fact, only in obedience to the dictates of selfishness and expediency. To put it in a concrete form, we would rather have to meet Mr. Gladstone's opposition to us on such a question as that of church-rates, that the kind of support rendered by a certain class of statesmen who think it necessary to throw out a tub to the whale, but who seem quite unable to understand the questions at issue, or to give us credit for intelligence and honesty. Even in his opposition he takes his stand upon principles, and we feel that we can honour his conscientiousness at the same time that we dissent from his judgment. A more skilful party leader might perhaps make larger promises, and even secure us some present advantages; but we shall gain infinitely more in the long

run; but still further, Mr. Gladstone has shown a disposition to look candidly and carefully at the points involved in this controversy. His friendly meeting and free conference with a number of prominent Nonconformists at Mr. Newman Hall's show that he is not one of those stern and obstinate bigots who are inaccessible to all reason, and who, in fact, assume to look down from the sublime heights of their own self-complacency, with infinite contempt upon those misguided sectaries who stand outside the pale of the National Church. We confess, indeed, to something of a feeling of shame that the indiscretion—to use no stronger term—of a Dissenting minister present should have dragged into public the particulars of an interview which ought to have been regarded as strictly private. It is true that Mr. Gladstone acceded to the request for the publication of the correspondence between himself and the advocate of what has happily been called the “half a dip of ink policy;” but this does not in our view alter the question. The request once made could not be refused, but to prefer it at all was a violation of good taste and high courtesy. Political dissenters are frequently charged with vulgarity, but we question whether any of them would have committed so egregious a breach of good manners. Mr. Gladstone, however, has no reason to be ashamed of the part which he took in the transaction. His course was manly, honest, and intelligent, and Dissenters need not regret that such an expression of his opinion has been elicited.

It is something to know that he is not likely to be caught by the visionary notion of “comprehension.” The very brilliant prospect held out to him of securing the adhesion of the “hundreds of dissenters who, though not mean enough to undervalue liberty, find their truest ideals of liberty in the furthest remove from a religious republic; men who remain dissenters by a stern compulsion through a love of truth and charity, and men who would sacrifice speculative dogma on church government, and even surrender some personal freedom to avert the calamities of religious strife,” does not seem to have captivated his fancy. It would seem as if the investment did not appear very tempting, although the terms were so marvellously easy. Only think—hundreds of Nonconformists to be purchased by “half-a-dip of ink!!” Possibly the gentlemen whose only idea of justice is that the national Church should be made to comprehend them; who make little account of the scruples of others, especially if they be favourers of a “religious republic,” provided their own can be respected; who are quite content that their present associates should remain in the “cold shade of Nonconformity,” if only they can bask in the sunshine of State favour; and to whom “personal freedom” and

"speculative dogma on Church government" are such trifling matters, that they are prepared to make some surrender of them in the interests of peace or of the Established Church—may not be the class of Nonconformists whom he would think it most desirable to propitiate. We can easily understand how his high-minded spirit would revolt from the cold selfishness which says, in effect, "There are a number of us who do not belong to these extreme radicals, and who are in the dissenting ranks only because we find the gate into the Establishment a little too strait. Widen it so far as to admit us. It is very little that needs to be done, and if that little change be made we will at once come in, and share your peace and comfort." Well he knows that such views are not held by any who have a right to speak as representatives of Protestant Dissent, that neither on one side nor the other would such terms be seriously entertained; that the only result of their adoption, were it possible, would be to attract from the ranks of Dissent a number of men of neutral tint, who are only a source of weakness, while the opposition of those whose objections to the State Church rest on the high ground of religious and political principle, and not on the mere fact that they are not themselves among the favourites of the Legislature, would be deepened and intensified; that even these new recruits would not be secured without a loss of old friends of the Establishment that would more than compensate for the gain; and in brief that even the extreme views, as Mr. Christopherson would deem them, of Dr. Vaughan are more feasible and less offensive than those of himself and his friends. It is the clear-sighted practical statesman who speaks when we are told, "Many a Churchman would deal liberally in questions of admission to equality of all civil, social, or educational privilege, who not only would resist attempts to alter the Church itself, with a view to comprehension, but would, from fear of this latter object, become jealous of all concessions appertaining to the former."

Nor would it be only to the sagacious politician that such a view would commend itself. Mr. Gladstone, as a decided and earnest adherent of certain ecclesiastical opinions, would be sure to reach just the same conclusion. Of the Evangelicals we can have no hope: they denounce their brethren of other schools of thought as Rationalists or as disguised Papists; they indulge in very tall talk about them, and are quite ready whenever occasion offers to invoke the strong hand of the law to expel them from the ecclesiastical preserves; but they will go no further. The narrowest of all parties in their opinions, they are the broadest and most comprehensive in their conduct. They are prepared to remain in Christian fellowship with a Father Ignatius or Dr. Colenso; they submit with wonderful resignation to see

the Church giving its shelter to doctrines they have proclaimed to be infidel or Popish; they will bear still more with meekness, provided only that they be allowed to remain in the enjoyment of its blessings themselves. We confess the utmost stretch of our imagination will not enable us to conceive of any contingency which could induce a voluntary secession of Evangelicals from the Establishment. High Churchmen are in a different position; they attach far more importance to the idea of "spiritual independence;" they are more determinately opposed to everything Erastian;—in all fairness we must add, they are more conscientious in the maintenance of their own tenets. An able provincial journal has well described their position and indicated their points of sympathy with Liberationists:—

"Hence, viewed from the highest point of churchmanship—and Mr. Gladstone's position is somewhere near this ecclesiastical Nebo—it ought to be a less difficult matter to sever every temporal tie which connects the Church, as an ecclesiastical corporation, with the state, than to make innovations in the doctrines and the ritual of the Church. Mr. Gladstone does not say so, but this is the tendency of his remarks, and the logical issue of his arguments. Dr. Pusey not merely implied, but asserted, in out-and-out terms, the same thing a few weeks ago, and in reference to Mr. Gladstone. The truth is, that, as we have often had occasion to observe, between the ecclesiastical principles of the High Church party and those of modern dissent there are numerous points of sympathy if not of identity. Hence the broad, uncompromising assertions of undiluted Nonconformity from the lips of Dr. Vaughan, though they struck Mr. Christopherson with dismay, would fall with no unaccustomed sound and no terrific force upon a mind like Mr. Gladstone's. The very idea of Nonconformity vanishes in the strife, and all that remains is a principle upon which both parties are fundamentally agreed—the spirituality and independence of the Church."

There is one more point to be remembered in relation to Mr. Gladstone. He is pre-eminently a progressive man. Mr. Masheder's book, which has really a good deal of interest as a piece of political biography, is very useful in reminding us of this. It was not very necessary to prove it any more than it was necessary to take so much pains to demonstrate some of the other wonderful things for which Mr. Masheder has so carefully elaborated his proof; as, for example, that there is an intimate connection between the *Nonconformist* newspaper and the Liberation Society; or that Protestant Dissenters, especially those who take decided ground as to the alliance of the Church and the State, are in favour of Liberal principles in politics. But still it

is not uninteresting, even despite the absurd exaggerations of Mr. Masheder to review, in both cases, the facts that he has so industriously arrayed. They give us a more distinct view than we could otherwise have had of the way in which Mr. Gladstone has gradually been emancipating himself from the influences of his early associations, and strengthen our confidence in his wisdom, his love of liberty, his strong sense of right, his resolution to follow out every great principle to its legitimate results. Anxiously, but hopefully, do we look forward to his political leadership. Less facile, less pliant, less gifted with tact than his predecessor he may be, but any defects of this character will be amply compensated by other and higher qualities. We doubt not that the sense of responsibility will repress those little outbursts—his enemies would say of petulance and passion, we would rather say of impatience with stupidity, or indignation at wrong doing—which even his friends have regretted, that he will cultivate more of those minor political virtues which a leader needs, and that the brilliancy of his genius, and the sterling honesty of his purpose will leave a lasting impression on our legislation.

To be continued.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Several notices of Books, intended to appear in the present number, are unavoidably postponed. The following have to be acknowledged :—

The Gospel Treasury and Expository Harmony.—Theological Works of J. H. Hinton, M.A.: 7th vol.—Luthardt's Fundamental Truths of Christianity—Reynold's Notes on the Christian Life.—Alypius of Tagaste.—Augustine Hymn Book.—Walks from Eden.—The Christian Monitor.—Palestine for the Young.

THE CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR.

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THE ROUND TABLE.

CHAPTER II.

THE EVENING WALK—THE LANE AND THE STAR—A NEW FRIEND—
ST. JOHN'S ROAD CHAPEL—A FIRST SERMON—A CRISIS.

WE left off, it will be remembered, just as Mr. Langston had joined the village preacher on his homeward walk.

A stranger would have almost instantly marked the altered manner of the two men. While in the desk, the preacher, though modest, had been confident, like a man who was master of the situation, and felt within himself a holy right to utter the things which he most surely believed. And while Langston had listened he had forgotten all conventional distinctions, and felt constrained to recognize in the speaker a man who, in things incomparably more important than the niceties of the Greek article, was able to be his teacher. But now, as the collegian addressed him, the preacher in his turn instinctively recognized one who in many respects was his superior, and Langston, notwithstanding his earnest solicitude, unconsciously assumed the manner that was natural to him; so that at first there was something of mutual shyness and awkwardness. But it lasted not long, for Langston was naturally frank and genial, and already felt a genuine respect for his companion, who was modest and deferential; and so before they had walked together many minutes they were conversing freely. Langston now learned that the

evening preacher was engaged in trade, a foreman at a large ironmonger's, but being one of a number who in turn "supplied" two or three village chapels in connection with the Non-conformist church he was a member of, it had devolved on him to conduct the service on the Common that evening. Mr. Langston had never fallen in with any Dissenters before, and was curious to learn the particulars of their belief and modes of worship and church action. And well pleased was Mr. Reynolds to satisfy his curiosity, "beginning," as requested, "at the beginning."

"You know, Sir," said he, "we believe, from our Lord's words to Nicodemus, that every one born into this world needs also to be born again."

"Born again? Yes, to be sure; you mean regeneration; what we call baptismal regeneration," interrupted Langston.

"No, sir, begging your pardon," rejoined the other; "we don't believe it is in the power of any man or any ceremony to produce a spiritual change in the heart of another. If we believed that a little water sprinkled on the face in connection with some words uttered by a priest, so called (I hope no offence, sir,) could effect such a change as is needed, we could believe in transubstantiation, or in magic."

But I must not linger on the details of that evening's talk. It must suffice to state the substance. The ironmonger's foreman was at home in the Scriptures, and quoted them freely and aptly; now and then even deviating slightly from the English version, but always with advantage, till Mr. Langston, in some surprise, asked him "if he knew Greek," when it appeared that he had acquired the rudiments of it, just enough to be able to understand in a measure the reasons of any critical emendation that he heard from his minister at the "Young Men's Bible Class." But he at once confessed that these little improvements of the text he had gathered and carefully treasured up as they had fallen from his pastor in the pulpit or class-room.

Mr. Reynolds was obliged to illustrate his belief on the subject of "the new birth" by a frank account of his own "conversion." And the other asked no end of questions, and at last said, musingly,—

"Well, I never heard anything just like this before; but, somehow, it does seem more like the New Testament tone than our books on Divinity Questions. And it seems also to come home to my own feelings better than they do. I feel I want something, and yet I don't know what. I feel as if something I cannot understand separated me from such men as wrote the Psalms, for instance, and the apostles of Christ, and the people who in all ages have felt themselves so religious inwardly that

religion was enough for them, so that they could rejoice in working and even suffering for their Master. I do not feel as if God's favour and a holy life could be quite everything to me. And yet, I—I—do—want—to be right, I am sure."

After a pause he stopped, and turned to his companion, and, putting his hand on his shoulder, said earnestly,

"Can you tell me how?"

They were standing in one of our English lanes, with high, irregular sand-banks on either side, covered with a profusion of ferns and honeysuckles and wild clematis, and in the clear sky the evening star was shining calmly. Reynolds said feelingly, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." "That does not explain it," said the other; "I have read and heard those words before. I do believe, and yet I do not feel as I wish to feel, nor am I what, according to you, I need to become. I have always believed in our Lord Jesus Christ. I was taught so from my childhood, but I am not born again, if my baptism was not regeneration."

"If Jesus Christ were here on earth now," began the other; but Langston interrupted him——

"If Jesus Christ were here now, in this very lane, standing just where you stand, I would fall down on my face and clasp His feet, and ask Him to make me one of His disciples, and I would give up everything, and I would follow Him, as a spaniel does his master!"

He started as he spoke the last word, for such had been the passionateness of his utterance that he had not heard an advancing footstep, although Reynolds had just recognized the form of his own pastor, who had come in this direction for an evening stroll, and who, having involuntarily heard the young man's declaration, at the same time perceived that the other was one of his own most valued members.

"And Christ would say, 'Young man, I say unto thee, Arise, thy faith hath saved thee. Follow me.'"

Langston gazed as he might have gazed on an angel suddenly become visible, when Mr. Fletcher, holding out his hand, continued:—

"Pardon me, my young friend; but having involuntarily heard your earnest confession to my friend Reynolds, I could not refrain from the declaration that instinctively rose to my lips;" and as Langston, in much emotion, took the offered hand, the stranger added:—

"I do not need to ask any questions. In your frank disclosure of your inmost heart towards the Christ, who seems to you, as yet, but as an unknown Saviour, I recognize the already incipient disciple. Be comforted; He hath never said to any, 'Seek

ye my face in vain.' Thy beginning may be small, but thy latter end shall be full of blessing. There is first the dawn, and then the sunrise; first the blade, and then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear."

The time would fail me to tell of all that followed. It was a holy hour. God's providence was in it. And after receiving a hearty invitation to visit Mr. Fletcher, and promising to do so, Langston turned back towards his now distant home. But as he walked he seemed on the confines of a new country, a new world. He had hope. That word he had spoken, in the solitude of the lane—spoken, too, so spontaneously—had seemed indeed nothing at the moment, but now seemed to have been as the narrow plank across a stream or gulf, by which one passes over to the other side. In speaking so intensely he realised more vividly than ever before the presence of the Saviour. God had sanctified and blessed the awakened and kindled imagination, till the young man all but felt that the very Lord whom he desired had suddenly come, and was then receiving his confession and his prayer. Recognizing how he should feel if Christ were there in very deed, he recognized that that was how he did therefore really feel towards Him, and also that he had actually come over to Christ's side, and a beginning had been made. That evening's return walk was such a season as he had never experienced. He felt as if he had passed from death to life, although the life was but of the faintest. This expression, however, was one that did not occur to him at the time, but only long afterwards, when retracing the event of that evening, the date of which he never forgot. Before he threw himself on his bed that night he had entered the date in a pocket Testament, and had also, on bended knee, repeated, as if to a present Christ, the prayer he had in the lane so spontaneously said he would offer if Christ were there. Words that no lesson had enabled him to understand, he now seemed to know the meaning of; and, especially, that the "faith" which had so sorely puzzled him, and which he knew not how to acquire, was just doing now mentally what the poor and miserable, and blind and leprous had once done bodily when the Saviour was on earth. And so he spoke to Christ as if he saw Him, and he seemed to know what words Christ would answer. And Christ became to him, even before he slept, such an actual living Presence as he had never before conceived of, and he said, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."

It was a matter of course that the next Sunday morning should find him one of Mr. Fletcher's congregation; and perhaps it would not be surprising if the incident in the lane on

the previous Thursday evening gave some tone to the sermon. People were struck with the minister's manner. Always devout and calmly earnest in the pulpit, he appeared that morning, they said, to be under the influence of some unusually happy inspiration. His own faith seemed quickened. He believed more deeply in preaching, as a Divine ordinance for the accomplishment of God's gracious designs. And at the prayer-meeting on the following Wednesday evening, one after another of those who prayed referred to the previous Sunday service as a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Mr. Langston listened, and became absorbed; deeply yet calmly moved, all his muscles were in a state of great tension, so that at the close of the sermon he found he had unconsciously so clenched his fingers that the effect was perceptible for some time afterwards. "Able to save unto the uttermost, to save me; and if He can He will. Yes, to be sure, He will. Why should He not? The glorious Saviour! Well might John the Baptist say he was not worthy to loose the latchet of His shoes. I will be His. I am. Cost what it may, I will be His disciple, His servant; and He shall do with me whatsoever seemeth Him good." Such was the frame of mind in which Mr. Langston left St. John's Road Chapel; such some of the things he inwardly uttered as the congregation broke up. He hastened out, unwilling to be recognized by either of his new friends just then, and spent the afternoon alone, longing for the evening service. At the close of which, as the Lord's Supper was to be administered, he took his place among the communicants, somewhat to the surprise of the good people, who looked almost as if an utter stranger among them must necessarily be an intruder. And one of the deacons quietly whispered to another, who was no other than the preacher of the previous Thursday evening—Reynolds—and he, in his turn, whispered to the minister, who gently signified that no notice was to be taken; for Mr. Fletcher was no ministerial martinet, and would never suffer "the letter" to over-ride "the spirit," either of the New Testament, or of Church action. And when the bread was handed to Mr. Langston, the minister spoke a word or two directly to the heart of the new communicant, which he himself, under the circumstances, received almost as the Galatians had received the words of the Apostle, although the rest of the people did not detect their special character.

It need hardly be said that Mr. Langston's whole future course was being very decidedly shaped by the events of those few days. He became a frequent visiter at Mr. Fletcher's; and, as he had no friends to consult, and no occupation to fix him to any particular place, he was free to pitch his tent where he

would. And very naturally he sought and obtained a temporary home in the town to which his steps had been thus happily guided. It was a county town, but my readers must pardon me if I disguise the locality under a fictitious name, and call it Kingstown. A pleasant cottage home he found with a worthy widow in the outskirts of the town. The house was long, of only one story, with a verandah in front, covered all over with honeysuckle and jasmine. And thither he brought his books, and one or two small family pictures he had saved out of the general wreck, and his bats, fishing-rods, gun, and the few other articles that constituted now all his worldly goods and chattels.

He resumed his studies, but now turned his attention chiefly to theology and church history, and hermeneutics. And finding the people he now associated with active in seeking to do good in various ways, he offered his services to the Sunday-school, and often accompanied his first acquaintance, Mr. Reynolds, into the villages. And in time, when, as he came to understand the nature and organization of a Christian Church among the Nonconformists, and the Scripture principles on which it is grounded, he offered himself for membership, he was forthwith welcomed into the fold. By-and-by he became superintendent of the school, and his "addresses" had a peculiarity about them which not only fixed the attention of the children, but interested the teachers; and soon one and another of the congregation would drop in when it was known that it was Mr. Langston's turn to "give the address."

All this is so familiar a process among the Nonconformists of England, that my readers will easily anticipate the result. There was a general conviction gradually sprung up that Mr. Langston should devote himself to the ministry. His pastor had frequent and earnest conversations with him on the subject; and, at last, urged by Mr. Fletcher, he consented to take the Thursday evening service in the little chapel on the Common, where he had himself, for the first time, begun to be aware of the light he had been longing for. And it so happened—for time flies fast, and we are obliged to crowd months into a page—that it was once again the season of the year, and the very week even, in which he had first entered that plain white-washed "Ebenezer." He had preferred to go thither alone, and to have his own thoughts for company. And as he walked he lifted up his heart in gratitude and prayer, and gave himself up wholly to do his Lord's will, as it should be made plain to him day by day. And now, if a stranger like his former self had happened to be attracted that evening to the little "Ebenezer" on Langley Common, he too might have been as much struck by the whole manner and spirit of the preacher as Langston had been twelve

months before. His text was, "The love of Christ constraineth us," and it was a theme which in those blessed days he was never weary of; and it seemed to him that if he had to preach a hundred sermons, this would still be the text.

Mr. Fletcher too had recorded the date of his first interview with our friend, and it is quite possible that he had arranged it also that Mr. Langston should preach his first sermon in that particular place, and at that time. For he knew the value of associations, and of many other little things that most of us are too apt perhaps to count as trifles, or even not to notice so much as to deem them even trifles. I judge that there was something of arrangement in it, though without a syllable being breathed, partly too from the circumstance that as the preacher was returning home, through the well-remembered lane, with the high irregular sand-banks on either side, covered with a profusion of ferns and honeysuckles and wild clematis, just as he had reached that memorable spot, where he had been so strangely prompted to express himself as he did, who should meet him but Mr. Fletcher, once again taking his evening stroll that way. And again in the clear sky, the evening star was shining calmly.

That evening's walk home with Mr. Fletcher, and the long, earnest, frank, and confidential talk afterwards in the pastor's study, brought things to a decision, and in the seclusion of the minister's "sanctum," the senior tenderly commended his young friend to the continued guidance and blessing of Him who is Head over all things to His Church. And then the young man himself, when his fatherly teacher had ended, remained upon his knees, and poured out his full heart to the God of all grace, who was able to endow, and guide, and employ, and bless him.

There was an unusual tenderness about both of them as they joined the family group at supper; and Mary Fletcher, as she could not but be struck by Mr. Langston's air, and the peculiar expression of his countenance, involuntarily thought of Stephen's, when all that looked upon him "saw his face, as it had been that of an angel." There was a light she had never before observed in any human face, and a pathos in his tones that affected her in spite of herself, and disturbed her pure young soul with new and confused emotions, and made her feel almost afraid of him. Nor was her previous composure and almost gentle indifference and maidenly ease in his company restored, when, for the first time, he called her, not Miss Fletcher, but—"Mary," and his eye more frequently than usual wandered to her, and seemed to find its resting-place.

Now I have no doubt that some of my readers will be half

inclined to think I have rather lost sight of the proprieties, by thus introducing Mary Fletcher so quickly after the solemn scene the study had been witness to. But I beg leave to differ from them, to differ totally. And I have frequently thought that "love" is often scarcely allowed to have its true character and place properly recognized among us; the character and place, I mean, which nature freely assigns, and which Scripture, always so true to nature, such a thoroughly human book, also uniformly recognizes. There is surely nothing incongruous if a young man, just risen from his knees in solemn consecration of his whole life to our Father who is in heaven, should, within the hour even, own the "might, the majesty of loveliness," when all that the one sex could desire in the other was found in one whose character was already well known to him. For,—

"Soft as the memory of buried love,
Pure as the prayer which childhood wafts above,"

Mary Fletcher was a prize such as is not to be found among girls whose thoughts are devoted to dress, and company, and pleasure, and light reading. Which things, I fear, constitute the staple of the life of many a young lady in the present day, whose friends and herself appear to have settled down into the belief that it is very easy and very pleasant "to make the best of both worlds" in a shallow sense, which a very little religious earnestness would trample underfoot in noble scorn.

Mr. Langston had, indeed, often thought of Mary's simple, artless, beautiful naturalness of manner, and she had seemed to him among girls what the lily of the valley is to the tulip. But, to tell the truth, Mary Fletcher had never let her thoughts rest on him, nor, indeed, on any other man. She would have shrunk instinctively from all thoughts and imaginations which would dim the crystal purity and maidenliness of the secret soul. Happily too for her, she had no companions that played with edged tools, and indulged in idle talk, and joked one another about this and that and the other gentleman of their acquaintance, and repeated what so-and-so had said, and painted pictures best left unpainted. Mary Fletcher was worth the winning. Everybody said that. Even her own sex said so. Both maids and matrons agreed that Mary Fletcher deserved the whole heart's love of the best man that could bring "a virgin passion" for her.

All love that deserves the name—all true love, from the lowest up to the highest forms—is from God, and the honest love of true hearts finds no place or hour forbidden to it. The sacraments of affection and the sacraments of religion do not necessarily jar. And Mr. Langston's self-consecration to God was not interfered with by a feeling which to-night, for the first time, took the form of a distinct conviction and desire that she should

be the sweet companion of his future life. The name of Jesus was not less to him, but more, when the name of Mary Fletcher began to blend itself with all his happiest anticipations. And that night, if the recording angel's page may in imagination be perused, Mary too allowed herself almost to breathe a prayer for him. For, somehow, that first confusion she had felt, and trepidation, and almost fear, when, for the first time, he had called her "Mary," soon passed away, and there seemed a music in her own name, as uttered by him, which surprised her; and though it was with a bashfulness she had never before exhibited, or even felt, that she took his offered hand at parting, there was a *je ne sais quoi*—a strange indefinable something in touch, and glance, and tone, which, for his part, he did not unworthily seek to conceal—that made her almost conscious that the Rubicon of her young life was being crossed. A new chord had been touched in her soul, softly but mightily, and continued to vibrate delicately and musically, for a time driving away sleep from the maiden pillow, and blending its new undertone with her devoutest prayers and holiest thoughts, and by-and-by, when slumber at last sealed her eyelids, none but her guardian angel, I verily believe, could tell through what new Edens fancy led the sleeper.

It was some days, however, before Mary Fletcher saw him again. He had wished thoroughly to search his own heart, and forecast the possible contingencies of the future, before seeking more directly the happiness of addressing her in a new character. That she was worthy of all the love and devotedness any man could offer her, and that life with her would be more easily noble and holy, as well as happy, than with any other of her sex he had ever met, he had no doubt. But, then, was he, too, the likeliest she might ever meet to prove worthy of her? Ought he to take the fate of so beautiful a nature into his hands? Was he fit to be the husband of such a girl as Mary Fletcher? Might he, by seeking her love, be possibly stepping in between her and some better lot in life? It was not self-love, you see, that made him pause and ponder, even after the almost involuntary manifestation of tender regard that he had allowed himself on that memorable evening. His whole soul, purged as it had been at the fountain of truth, recognized that he had no right to consult merely his own inclinations and desires and happiness in such a step. The woman is not made for the man in any sense which authorizes him to think of himself alone in relation to her. And she has a full and God-given right to demand as much in a husband as he looks for in a wife; as much, though different. The old Romans expressed a fragment of this truth in the formula which the new-made wife uttered as she crossed the threshold of her new home,—“*Where thou art Caius, I am Caia.*” The woman is the one living half, and the man the other (neither less nor

more), of the loving unity, the one flesh, which all true marriage effects.

Mr. Langston knew what a man ought to bring of body, soul, and spirit to a true "daughter of God" whom he might wish to blend her life with his. And when, after faithful search, he felt conscious of no impediment existing, in either his past or present, why he should not follow whither his heart led, he wrote a plain, frank, manly letter to her father, referring the matter to his judgment and affection for his daughter, and begging him, if he had the faintest doubt of his suitability as her future husband, not to withhold it. And as still he scarcely believed that there would be any such doubt in the minds of her parents, he inclosed a note for her, to be given if they consented to his proposal.

Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher, on the receipt of the letter, spent such an hour in the "study" as thoughtful parents may conceive. Mary, not aware of the cause, wondered slightly at the long and private consultation that kept the study door so long closed. But, after a time, her mother reappeared, and gave her a fond, earnest, maternal kiss. There was a tear in her eye, and her voice was tremulous, as she said—"My dear, here's a note for you, which you had better read in your own chamber." And then, unable any longer to restrain her emotions, pressed her child to her full heart, and in a long, long embrace, so fond, so earnest, with no word spoken, but with many tears, told plainly that the note was fraught with some momentous tidings.

(To be continued.)

CALIBAN UPON SETEBOS.

SUCH is the title of one of the most thoughtful and suggestive poems which Robert Browning has given us. It occurs in his last volume, the "Dramatis Personæ." All readers of Shakespeare will at once perceive the nature of the poem from the title, and the more surely as the poet has added, explanatorily, "or, Natural Theology in the Island;" and, still more plainly to indicate his object, has used as a motto the twenty-first verse of the Fiftieth Psalm—"Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself." With this threefold key to the meaning of the poem, we should have left it to the quiet study of the reader of the volume, had not a very intelligent friend, and who

is too a keen admirer of the poet, recently asked us to explain it. And such a request, from a man whose name is well known in that branch of poetry which adopts form and colour instead of words, suggested the thought that possibly there were others also to whom a brief notice of this particular poem might not be unacceptable. Craving the pardon of the sufficiently informed then, for giving to the less initiated what may almost seem superfluous explanation, we hope thereby to add a few to the intelligent readers of the volume which contains it.

It is in Shakespeare's play of "The Tempest" that Caliban figures. And although we get incidental information concerning him from other speakers, as Prospero and Miranda, he chiefly develops his own character in word and action, as the dramatic principle requires. From the dialogue between Prospero and Ariel [Act I scene 1], we learn that

(Prospero) the damned witch, Sycorax,
For mischiefs manifold, and sorceries terrible
To enter human hearing, from Argier
 was banish'd; for one thing she did
They would not take her life.

**This blue-eyed hag was hither brought with child,
And here was left by the sailors.**

Then was this island
(Save for the son that she did litter here,
A freckled whelp, hag-born) not honour'd with
A human shape.

Ariel. Yes; Caliban, her son.

Prospero. . . . that Caliban
Whom now I keep in service.

Prospero . . . Come on ;
We'll visit Caliban, my slave, who never
Yields us kind answer.

Miranda. 'Tis a villain, sir,
I do not love to look on.

Prospero. Thou poisonous slave, got by the devil himself
Upon thy wicked dam, come forth!

[Enter Caliban.]

Caliban. As wicked dew as e'er my mother brush'd
With raven's feather from unwholesome fen,
Drop on you both! A south-west blow on ye,
And blister you all o'er.

This island's mine, by Sycorax, my mother,
Which thou tak'st from me. When thou camest first,
Thou strok'st me, and mad'st much of me;
 would'st give me
Water with berries in it; and teach me how
To name the bigger light and how the less,
That burn by day and night: and then I lov'd thee.

And show'd thee all the qualities of the isle.
 Cursed be I that I did so. All the charms
 Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!
Prospero. . . . Thou most lying slave,
 Whom stripes may move, not kindness;
 I have used thee,
 Filth as thou art, with human care.

Abhorred slave!
 Which any print of goodness will not take,
 Being capable of ill! I pitied thee,
 Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour,
 One thing or other when thou did'st not, savage,
 Know thine own meaning, but would'st gabble like
 A thing most brutish
Caliban. You taught me language; and my profit on 't
 Is, I know how to curse.

Caliban (aside). I must obey; his art is of such power,
 It would controul my dam's god, Setebos."

Passing over other intimations, we come to Act II., scene 2, where Stephano thus speaks of him:—

"This is some monster of the isle with four legs; who hath got, as I take it, an ague. Where should he learn our language? If I can recover him and keep him tame, and get to Naples with him, he's a present for any emperor that ever trod on neat's leather . . ."

Subsequently Caliban is spoken of as "a man-monster;" and, receiving wine from Stephano, says of him—

"That's a brave god, and bears celestial liquor; I will kneel to him.
 I prithee be my god."

But eventually, in Act V., scene 1, on discovering the drunkenness and feebleness of Stephano, and the vast superiority of his own master Prospero, he says, on being ordered by the latter to a certain employ—

"Ay, that I will; and I'll be wise hereafter,
 And seek for grace [pardon?] What a thrice-double ass
 Was I to take this drunkard for a god,
 And worship this dull fool!"

True to his poet's art, and with all the kindness of genius of the loftiest order, Shakespeare does not allow us wholly to hate, nor yet wholly despise, even this monster. The true poet knows by a divine-instinct that unqualified hatred or contempt for any living thing is not good for man, not safe for him, but most utterly hurtful to him; and so he relieves the picture of this loathsome wretch by some touches which awaken in us pity and even a certain kind of sympathy. Take, for instance, this proof of a nature not wholly insensible to the better:—

"The isle is full of noises,
Sounds, and sweet airs that give delight and hurt not.
Sometimes a thousand twanging instruments
Will hum about mine ears : and sometimes voices
That, if I then had waked after long sleep,
Will make me sleep again ; and then, in dreaming,
The clouds, methought, would open and show riches
Ready to drop upon me ; that when I wak'd,
I cried to dream again."

Then he knows—and no slight knowledge this—the best man, after all. And doing justice to the superiority of the spirits Prospero had invoked, and therefore to the superiority of Prospero himself, says :—

"O Setebos, these be brave spirits indeed !
How fine my master is !"

as, indeed, he had previously said of Trinculo—

"I'll not serve him, *he is not valiant.*"

We have not quoted quite everything in the drama which relates to Caliban, but still nearly all, and fully enough to enable even readers to whom "The Tempest" is not familiar, to read Mr. Browning's poem with understanding and perhaps appreciation.

It will have been observed that Shakespeare makes even this huge piece of deformity, because he still had something of the human in him, exhibit some notion of a God. Shakespeare is a master ; he saw into the heart of things too truly not to know that wherever there is human intelligence and human feeling, however attenuated, or however blunted, there a God of some kind is a necessity. In Shakespeare's page even Caliban has an idea of a god. So had the hag Sycorax, his "wicked dam." And Caliban is familiar with the name of his witch-mother's god, and it comes out ever and anon, as we say, quite pat, and "Setebos, Setebos," falls from the creature's ugly toad-like mouth as a word of course.

But as to the notions such a "monster" would form of any being whom he called God, and would be ready even to worship, it was no part of Shakespeare's object in "The Tempest" to intimate. It would have been beside his purpose, although he did not choose to paint him wholly godless. What Shakespeare was not called to do, however, Mr. Browning has done, and a most worthy service he has performed. His Caliban, musing and soliloquising on his dam's god, Setebos, is a welcome supplement to the drama of the elder poet.

Mr. Browning, we dare say, would not undertake to preach, in the professional sense of the word, but he is a fine and masterly preacher notwithstanding ; and he means to preach, too, though

not in sermon fashion. And this "Caliban upon Setebos" is one of his contributions towards the end which all true divines—and all true preachers that may not be much of divines—aim at.

The poem, of only twelve pages, opens with a description, inclosed within brackets, of Caliban, sprawling at noon,

"Flat on his belly in the pit's much mire,
With elbows wide, fists clenched to prop his chin;
And while he kicks both feet in the cool slush,
And feels about his spine small eft-things course,
Run in and out each arm, and make him laugh;"

he

"——— talks to his own self, howe'er he please,
Touching that other whom his dam called God."

The rest of the poem is a soliloquy by this lowest of conceivable thinkers. He, too, like his betters, must perforce speculate on the origin of Setebos, his dam's god, and his relation to space, to creation, and the creatures; and whether he, too, has ought higher than himself. And Caliban

"Thinketh, he dwelleth i' the cold o' the moon."

A very congenial dwelling-place, one fancies, for the god of many another than Caliban, and who would laugh to scorn the poor monster's notion. Then, he

"Thinketh, he made it, with the sun to match."

The reader will note that the cold moon is the primal and centre object, and the sun merely made to match; which, too, has its parallel, perhaps, in other theology than that of the island.

"But not the stars; the stars came otherwise;
Only made clouds, winds, meteors, such as that."

Then the sprawling creature falls, of course, to speculating on the moving cause of creation; and being himself, for the most part, in a poor plight, stirred to action only by the influence of the disagreeable, he quite naturally

"Thinketh, it came of being ill at ease."

And himself being spiteful and malignant, how can he conceive but that he, too,

"Made all we see, and us, in spite: how else?"

Further, conscious of manifold imperfections and wants—being unable to fly, for instance—Caliban thinks that if he himself possessed the power to make a thing that could fly, he would do it, and make a bird—just for his own creature to exhibit the faculty he would like to be conscious of himself. But having

now the idea of a creature all his own, by virtue of having been created by him, he pictures to himself how he would treat it. And very naturally he thinks that—

“ ——— if his leg snapped, brittle clay,
And he lay, stupid-like, ——— why, I should laugh.”

No doubt at all about it. Caliban would surely laugh at the helplessness and wretchedness into which his creature had fallen. But, then, suppose the helpless creature should begin to call on his creator, Caliban—what then ?

“ And if he, spying me, should fall to weep,
Beseech me to be good, repair his wrong,
Bid his poor leg smart less or grow again,—
Well, as the chance were, this might take,
Or else not take, my fancy ; I might hear his cry,
And give the manikin three legs for his one,
Or pluck the other off,
And lessoned [taught him] he was mine, and merely clay.”

And very captivating is this idea of absolute independence, and the full power to act as capriciously as he might please. Caliban, too, has his notion of “sovereignty,” and about on a par with some others that we know. Frankly enough he asks :—

“ Were this no pleasure, lying in the thyme,
Making and marring clay at will ?”

And, as a perfect matter of course, reasoning from himself to his god, he adds—

“ So He.”

Full of instruction, which it were needless to indicate, is the comment immediately following :—

“ Thinketh, such shows nor right nor wrong in Him,
Nor kind nor cruel : He is strong, and Lord.
'Am strong myself, compared to yonder crabs
That march now from the mountain to the sea ;
'Let twenty pass, and stone the twenty-first,
Loving not, hating not, just choosing so.
'Say, the first straggler that boasts purple spots
Shall join the file, one pincer twisted off ;
'Say, this bruised fellow shall receive a worm,
And two worms he whose nippers end in red ;
As it likes me each time, I do : so He.”

Caliban proceeds on the same line. His theology is consistent with itself. Grant the premisses, and all follows inevitably. Not Hamilton or Mill could ever need a more perfect logic than he employs. Given a Caliban, thinking and reasoning about God, and the theology follows. And the creature might boast that his “system” would hold water too. In fact, most systems are

tolerably self-consistent and coherent, and require to be grappled with—not further on, but at the beginning. What is the root principle? How natural for a Caliban—recognizing that if the creature he had formed should begin arrogantly to fancy its powers its own, he would crush it—to believe so of Setebos.

“Would not I smash it with my foot? So He.”

Further, he thinks that Setebos put forth his power and skill for the pleasure of the exercise ;

“By no means for the love of what is worked.”

If Caliban had been learned in Hebrew, and could have put on a doctor's cap and gown, he might, this verse being witness, have been supposed to have had a not inconsiderable hand in the production of certain catechisms that set our childhood's teeth on edge. For we were taught—and by means of “Scripture proofs,” too—that God had an utterly selfish purpose in creation. Only, of course, decency was preserved better than to express the sentiment in the plain English we here use. A finer word was used, which, being interpreted, amounts to just the Calibanic theology. Then he falls to supposing another case ; for “suppose” and “suppose” play a great part, you know. If creatures made by Caliban, reasoning from what obtains, conclude that “because he did so yesterday with me, so he must do henceforth and always,” why, he

“Would teach the reasoning couple what ‘must’ means ;
Doth as he likes, or wherefore, Lord? So He.”

The future, too ; Caliban thinks about that.

“Believeth, with the life the pain shall stop.
His dam held different,—that after death,
He both plagued enemies and feasted friends.
Why, He doth His worst in this our life,
Giving just respite lest we die through pain,
Saving last pain for worst,—with which an end.”

And have we not, out of “the island,” met with the notion, though not put into well-defined words, perhaps, that the Being who has our fate in His hands will soon mar our bliss if He sees us too pleased and happy, ever taking away what we love best? The notion was common enough in the old pagan times. Greece and Rome had many a word that recognized it. And we have sometimes fancied there was a sort of baptized paganism still extant, and that perhaps no inconsiderable portion of our very Christianity needs to be Christianized. Thus Caliban in the island :

“Meanwhile, the best way to escape His ire
Is, not to seem too happy.”

Then let us recognize that the religion which starts wrong, and

which is wrong, however sincere, can be but superstition ; of which the tokens are not wanting that there is plenty of it still, and plenty of it, too, where the imputation would be scornfully resented. Aye, it is a fact, test it how we will, that wherever sound and true religion is not, there superstition is, whether in saint or sinner, whether in devotee or sceptic. Was there ever a man who, not being religious, was not superstitious ? We doubt it. We do more—we deny it. Concealed it may be, or may be thought to be, but there it is ; and oftentimes the completer the scepticism the greater the superstition. We could summon a great cloud of witnesses, from Julius Cæsar down to his Imperial biographer. Religion, or superstition—which ? We take our choice, but the one or the other we cherish, even if we deny it stoutly. Of course, Caliban's system of theology would not be complete without a method of appeasing the anger of Setebos, if aroused. And how ?

“ Would, to appease Him, cut a finger off,
Or of my three kid yearlings burn the best ;
Or let the toothsome apples rot on tree,
Or push my tame beast for the orc to taste,” &c.

The poem ends as it began, with a few lines within brackets. A storm begins. Darkness sets in, and a fierce wind sweeps over all, shouldering the pillared dust ; and fast-invading fires begin !—White blaze !—a tree's head snaps—and there, there, there, there His thunder follows ! Now how will the terrible phenomena of nature affect a Caliban ? Will he not inevitably interpret them into judgments ? Aye, as readily as if he were a bishop. Only, perhaps, with this difference, which though small is in his favour, that instead of pointing them at others he will take them to himself. And, herein like Volney in the storm, he will begin to recant his obnoxious utterances.

“ There scuds His raven that hath told Him all.
It was fool's play, this prattling ! Ha ! ”

“ Fool to gibe at Him ! ”

And poor Caliban has his own notions of propitiation. These, too, are inevitable.

“ Lo ! 'lieth flat, and loveth Setebos ;
Maketh his teeth meet through his upper lip ;
Will let those quails fly ; will not eat this month
One little mess of whelks, so he may 'scape.”

And now what thinks the reader of “ Natural Theology in the Island ” ? Wherein is Caliban wrong ? And why is he wrong ? His god was the projection from his own mind and soul of all that was arbitrary, capricious, petulant, irritable, and selfish, only

on an enlarged scale. And how often it is so ! And how strange that even when a "revelation" would correct our crudities, we are not always willing to have them corrected, but still are open to the charge brought by the God of Israel against His people : "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself." Neither are the most intellectual among us, nor the most poetical, neither the sentimental, nor the artistic natures, any more safe of themselves from falling into this error than the creature whose natural theology has been indicated. Well says Mr. Martineau, in a passage* which so happily exhibits the truth we wish to express, that we shall offer no apology for doing ourselves the pleasure of quoting at length, and of therewith concluding our remarks on Mr. Browning's poem :—

"Our minds are so ill-proportioned, and, through ignorance and evil, violate so much the proper symmetry of a spiritual nature, that, left to their own wilful ways, they misrepresent to us the true essence of perfection ; and many an image does our adoring fancy grave, and then obey, which cannot innocently stand in the place of God, and supplants a worship of divine right. Thus there is the *Philosopher's* idol, shaped and set up by Intellect, unsanctified of conscience. To this is attracted an exclusive reverence for Wisdom, Thought, and Skill. The votary has learned how little is all he knows, and stands with serene aspiration before the presence of Infinite Reason, unconscious, meanwhile, of his children neglected at his feet, and the cries of humanity bleeding near him in the dust.

"There is the *Artist's* idol, pourtrayed upon the wall of nature with the pencil of beauty, and reflecting a flush of loveliness over heaven and earth : many a glorious soul has bowed down before this, and been inspired by it to do great and wondrous things ; yet how often betrayed at the same time into passionate licence and mean peevishness !

"There is the *Stoic's* idol, chiselled by austere conscience from the granitic masses of spiritual strength, and worshipped as the image of divine Justice, Majesty, and Holiness. This has won and held captive the noblest spirits that are not wholly Christian, and glorified them to a manliness approaching something divine ; yet wanting still the mellowing of pity, and the grace of sweet and glad affections.

"And there is the *Woman's* idol, with Madonna look, captivating to gentler minds, embodying and awakening the reverence for Mercy, and disinterested Love ; and by omission enfeebling the severe healthfulness of duty, and merging the struggling heroism of this life in the glorified saintship of another.

* "Endeavours after the Christian Life."

"All these are but delusive impersonations of separated attributes of God ; of His Intellect, His creative Thought, His Will, His Affectionateness. They are mutilated representations of His nature ; idols of the worshipper's heart, the serving of which will rather confirm and exaggerate, than remedy, the defective proportions of his soul ; elevating him, indeed, above himself, but still leaving him below his powers. Nor is there any security against this devotion to idols of the mind, except that which Heaven itself hath furnished to all Christendom : the reverential acceptance of Christ as the highest Image of the Invisible God, the complete and finished representation of His moral perfections. Here nothing is exuberant, nothing deficient ; but there prevails a harmony of spirit absolute and divine. In the Eternal Providence that rules us, reason can conceive, conscience can demand, affection can discern, nothing which has not its expression in the Author and Perfecter of Faith. In worshipping the combination of attributes, through which He has shown us the Father, there can be no fear that any duty will be forgotten, any taste corrupted, any aspiration laid asleep. Drawn upward by such an object, nothing in us can remain low and weak ; the simplicity of the child, the strength of the man, the love of the woman, the thought of the sage, the courage of the martyr, the elevation of the saint, the purity of the angel, press and strive to unite and realize themselves within our souls. Standing before a God, of whose *Mind* the universe, of whose *Spirit* the Man of Nazareth, is the accepted symbol, we must become, in proportion to the sincerity and depth of our devotion, transfigured with the divinest glory of reason and affection that can rest upon a nature like ours, and, raised to a comprehension of that 'love of Christ which passeth knowledge,' our souls must not only attain a fairer proportion, but expand also to nobler dimensions as they become 'filled with the fulness of God !'"

A GLEAM OF WINTER SUNSHINE.

THERE are few who have not been struck, during the winter season, with the somewhat mournful beauty of the winter sunshine. It is a sight to arrest the most careless observer to see the glory of the winter sun flash through broken storm-clouds over the desolate landscape ; or, with equal interest, we mark the clear scintillating lustre sparkling over the snowy plains, glittering on the woods and hedgerows fretted wondrously by

the frost, and eliciting a pale, cold, arrowy brilliance from every point of view. Pleasant is the wintry gleam in the thoughts it calls up. It reminds us that the great fountain of life still pours from his urn light and heat. He has not quenched his lamp, though we have changed our position. There is a reminiscence in it of balmy summer days gone by, and a hope of spring-tide beauty yet again to be. What a change the outpouring of the steadfast lustre for a moment makes in all the prospect! A scene is now passing before the memory of the writer, in which this magic power is finely displayed. We attempt to recal it.

We gaze from an eminence over a wide-spreading view. Downward, on one side, sweep reaches of park-like lands, interspersed with groups of noble trees, leading the eye on to a height crowned with a fine, many-columned wood. In front runs a range of well-timbered hills, the valley winding low between. On our other hand lies a village, straggling away up the valley; and beyond it, widely extending, level fields and gardens, and wood and coppice, and clumps of trees, where cottages nestle. Through the low grounds wanders the stream, now in a wavering, uncertain sort of course, now spreading out into reaches of shining water. All is dark, lifeless, heavy—storm-beaten, rain-plashed. The skies lour over it, dismal and threatening. The distant woods are all blurred with trailing mists. The nearer slopes are swept by sharp-cutting blasts and showers. The stream wanders swollen and muddy, its spreading pools nothing but flats of thick water. The trees are bare and leafless, and the cottages show through them, dripping and comfortless. There is no life apparent anywhere. Over all presses down the sunless day, without cheer or hope. But look! A beam of sunshine begins to struggle through. The clouds break, the fringes are turned into gold, the beams glint all around; and at last, out pours the sudden blaze of the wintry sun! Then see how all nature feels the touch of the vivid glory! The distant woods are chequered with sunlight, and their fine tracery floats in a golden haze. The nearer slopes smile to the opening heaven through all their dank, dripping shrubs and trees. The stream flashes out in the sudden blaze, and all his plashy reaches are turned to dim gold. The cottages catch the splendour on their small, deep-sunk windows; the very smoke is tinged with light, and the drippings of the eaves sparkle as they fall. The hedgerows gleam with diamonds. The heavens seem to have been lifted up higher, and show, in their vaster scope, the intermingling of light and shade—blue peeping out here and there, and yellow lustre flecking the riven gloom. What a glory that gleam of wintry sunshine gives to the landscape! How it affects our own feelings! We rise from cheerless gloom to jocund hope. We

realise the fact that, amid all the desolation, life, and the source of life, still survive. We anticipate the fragrant spring, and the happy hours of the lovely summer time. And hark! As awakened by the genial glow, a bird breaks into song and completes the charm.

So pleasant, though mournful, is the winter sunshine. But with whatever splendour it glows upon us, it is, after all, cold and unvivifying. It brightens; it shows, and a little cheers, the desolation; but it does not revive. The question naturally recurs—Why this pale and feeble lustre? It is the same sun as beams on us in fervid summer. We are nearer now than then? Why is this beam so powerless?

The explanation is suggestive. Yon winter gleam comes shooting from a lower elevation than in summer time, and thus must pass through much more of our dense, cloud-piled atmosphere. The difference is just the same as when we move our place from the front of a mighty fire to the side of the same. We are out of the range of the direct rays. So in summer we are more exposed to the direct rays of the sun, and in winter we receive the rays more from the side. They pass through the strata of our heavy atmosphere, and lose heat and purity. In addition to this, from the very same cause, the relative position of earth and sun, the time of light is shorter each day, and the power of darkness and the cold accumulates. Hence the beam of sunshine is destitute of power to renew the dead earth; loses its heat to the moisture-laden air, and falls feebly on the chilled landscape. Thence, too, the heavy storm-clouds gather, and the tempests frequently burst upon us. The heat which is accumulating at the equatorial or middle parts of the earth's rotundity, sweeps up the clouds from the bosom of the deep, disturbs the equilibrium of the atmosphere, and sends tempestuous winds and treasures of the clouds to be precipitated upon our northern regions. We do not pretend to unfold these processes of nature in detail. We merely enunciate the general principle.

Now, it has been said that the visible is the reflex of the invisible, the material of the spiritual. Without entering upon that question we may surely see in the phenomena which are passing round us in this visible frame of things, much that will freshly and strikingly illustrate spiritual truth; nay, perhaps, suggest aspects of our higher relations, and more subtle, which would otherwise escape us. Musing upon the beauty and powerlessness of the winter sunshine in this aspect, and the simple suggestive explanation which science gives of it, is there not to be gathered from it a lesson of high import in spiritual things?

There come times of wintry desolation and deathly apathy in

the history of Christianity, of churches, of individuals ; when all the light that floods them only shows a lifeless wilderness, without bloom or verdure or song. Those middle ages of European history may be fitly so characterized. Like winter sun-gleams now and then glows out upon them the life of some noble servant of God, a true beam from the fountain of light. A Saint Bernard or a Xavier pours upon the scene of wintry death the splendour of a divine life. But it only serves to show the complete desolation. All spiritual power and beauty are wanting. There is no energy or outgoing of true life. Even the enterprises which emanate in that time, surge onward like a fierce winter tempest. Such wild frenzied adventures as the Crusades are liker to the devastating storms than to the great tidal impulse of pure, genial, beneficent, spiritual energy. What a destitution of spiritual life through all that period ! Not all the grace of sweet song or high-wrought poesy ; not Petrarch's liquid measure, nor Dante's solemn verse ; not all the majesty and glory of painting and architecture which characterized that period in unmatched richness ; not the splendour and sweetness of Raphael nor the sublimity of Michael Angelo Buonarrotti, can redeem the time from spiritual death.

Or, if we come to our own land. Look into the history, the religious history, of the time of James I. or Charles I., or Charles II. A long period of wintry inertness and general destitution of religious activity. Did ever any one read the true and faithful history of the reign of Charles II. without a certain sense of awe at the superlative dishonour and godlessness of the time ? Enough of ritualism, too great plenty of form, and much scrupulousness to ordinances ; but an utter dearth of spiritual life.

Or, if we go onward toward the times when Whitfield and Wesley rang an awakening cry throughout England, and the Spirit of God, through the preached word, breathed with quickening power on that valley of dry bones, we shall find occasion enough to apply the same epithet. Leighton spoke of the Church in his day as a fair carcase without a spirit. Burnet mourned in his day, not open immorality or scandalous profanity, but simply a dead cold inertness and destitution of living power. Winter ! winter ! Sunbeams of piercing splendour flashing over it from the lives of noble holy men ; but winter only made the more manifest in their holy lustre of thought and life. And thus are we compelled to speak of many an age and many a Church of Christ. For no majesty of worship, no beauty of ritual, no gorgeousness of ceremonial, or imposing solemnity of services, could atone for that want of living energy and beauty which is the great end of all, the crown and consummate grace

of religion. You might hang blossoms, made by cunning art, on the dead branches of the garden shrubs in winter, and produce an artificial show. But, though every blossom were fashioned of precious stones to flash in the sun and imitate the reality, yet would all the riches and beauty of it not produce, to insect or bird or man, the fresh loveliness of the opening spring. All would be winter still.

And, now, if we present to ourselves the question, what is the cause and condition of that cold apathy and death, that icy winter which characterizes certain periods of the history of Christianity, and marks the vicissitudes of separate Churches?—one answer is readily suggested—The winter sun-gleam is unvivifying, just because the earth is in such a relation to the sun that the rays, instead of coming upon us directly, come obliquely, from a less elevation, and have to traverse more of the cold, heavy, rain-charged atmosphere ere they reach us. So in spiritual things. It is the position in which we place ourselves to God and to the life-giving truth which makes all the difference. We have a heaven in our spiritual kingdom, and a glorious sun in its centre. Our heaven is the vast expanse of divine truth; spread over us, high, removed, yet encircling us on all sides; drawing near to us, falling down on our horizon; clear, blue, lofty, all-glorious, infinite; through which shine the changeless stars. The Sun of that heaven is Jesus Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, set in the very centre thereof, round whom the whole system of truth revolves, and all worship and all heart aspirations, and all great heavenly hopes, and all nobly inspired lives; at whose beams the frozen heart is warmed and quickened, in whose splendours the Churches of Christ live and are strong and beautiful, and by whose outshinings all this great world is being quickened.

Our summer and our winter depend here, as in the natural world, on our relative position to that central sun. When we place ourselves directly in the full power of his life-giving rays, then are we filled with life and energy. Our examination of the periods of wintry apathy in the general progression of Christianity, and in the history of individual Churches, shows that this is the explanation in most cases of their condition. The direct influence of the Great Truth is wanting. For a long period the Bible, wherein the full lustre of the great truth shines out in the Gospels of the life of Christ, was reserved from the people. What beams of Divine truth came to them, came so obliquely, and had passed through such dense mists of ignorance, worldly passions, superstition, perversions of men's self-interested motives, that we cannot wonder if those rays which did reach the poor yearning heart were all feeble and powerless. In the early ages

of the history of Christianity, when such men as Chrysostom preached to the people, the living voice almost supplied the want of the Word itself. For Christ was there; Christ full orb'd as the Sun of Righteousness, Saviour, Son of God, and Son of man. But when the dark days pressed, in which there was no living voice to proclaim Jesus Christ, and the Great Word was all unknown, then the wintry cold fastened upon the hearts of men, and death gradually laid an icy touch on all the sources of living energy. And when again life began to circulate in the veins of the Christian community, it was as the Word in which Christ lived and moved was brought freely in contact with the people. With Wycliffe in England, thus the great change ensued. And all along our history, just as men are brought face to face with the Word itself, and come into contact with Jesus Christ therein displayed, so does the Church of Christ, and individual Christianity, abound in life and energy. The Word of God was not read by the people, nor was it amply proclaimed from the pulpit. Religion failed of its noble stimulus. During the reign of Charles II. we are continually struck by the contrast of the death which reigned in the then dominant Episcopal Church, and the vigorous life of the Nonconformist congregations. In the former the ceremonial was ever more and more largely developed, and the amount of scriptural teaching decreased and deteriorated in tone and purpose. The contrary was the course of things in the Nonconformist community. Whatsoever their faults and deficiencies, the congregations insisted on a continuous exhibition of God's Word, and the preachers exulted to meet their desire. South might caricature the Puritan "pound texts," and doubtless he had cause enough. But whilst he was spending his time in ridiculing the Puritans and pursuing them with the bitter shafts of his wit, the Church was tainted with the prevailing viciousness, and not far behind the profligate nobility in their readiness to yield principle and liberty for a gilded smile of royalty or a flattering word from one in power. There were splendid exceptions; but they were exceptions.

At the same time the hated, despised Puritans were kindling into fresh energy at the beams of divine truth, poured full upon them, all their noblest attributes of character. The contrast, indeed, begins even in the time of Elizabeth to be thus strongly marked between the two great parties. To the one religion came as a ceremonial, to the other religion was a life, fed on God's Word, vivified in the clear full beams of the Sun of Righteousness, presented in the Word. To these latter the "preaching ordinance" was the soul, the heart of all religious worship. So it is at this day. Now this is a truth of immense importance. In our day there is a great temptation to fall away from our

source of strength. True, we reprobate the great error that anything but direct contact with the Eternal Life and Light, anything but full immediate communion with the Fountain of vital energy, can ever nourish in us a strong masculine Christianity. We know and acknowledge this. But there is generally a secret reservation in our day as to how, and under what circumstances, we best come under the full blaze of divine light and life. It is not, perhaps, the unchastened, dazzling lustre of the mighty sun that is most genial to the tender blade and opening blossom. Nor is it on some mountain-peak, exposed to the sun's unclouded direct power, that we realize most profoundly and pleasantly his vivifying influence. So, it has been said, and we confess its truth, that to be continually urging the bare appeal—"Come to Jesus! come to Jesus!"—or to be reiterating with vehement emphasis the glorious truth in such a sentence as—"God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life;"—even the earnest and continuous repetition of such truth, is not, perhaps, the only way, nor even the most effectual, of bringing us into pure and direct communion with the strength of God, by which we are made strong. The warmth, light, and energy of the great Christian verity reach us through every doctrine, institution, enterprise, precept, in which the Spirit of Christ is breathed. Every life even, in which Christ rules and lives, radiates that divine energy. It is just as in nature, where the sunshine is reflected from every surface, and accumulated and softened in reflection, where the cloud even becomes a fine medium of vivifying impulse as it catches and casts downward the burning beam, softened and adapted to the tender growth. Thus in the Church of Christ, in her ordinances, in her praises, in her worship, in all her enterprises, in the lives of her members, there may glow the very heart of the love of Christ, and the warmth of the great truth beam with a radiance genial as the summer sun. Thus, too, in preaching the Word; it may be proclaimed with all intellectual effort; it may be varied through doctrine, precept, exhortation, appeal, rebuke; it may deal with a vast range of subjects; may take up, as each trenches on the peculiar sphere of Christian teaching, science, literature, the passing events of the age, even politics, and the great questions which agitate political parties; and each one of these may become as a new surface to reflect the Sun of Righteousness in His life-giving power to men. All this we grant without a moment's hesitation. We believe that such a noble usage in Christian truth has been the custom of the greatest preachers, and has been mighty for good. We have no sympathy whatsoever with that narrow prejudice which would limit the sphere

and range of our ministry in the proclamation of the Word until it became as limited in scope and utterance as the rant of the lowest class of Primitive Methodist preachers, or as barren, vague, simpering, and pithless as the prelections of the Low Evangelicals of the Establishment. But these preachers influence a large class, and "do a work"? Well, may there not be, is there not, work to be done of a higher character and more enduring? Why, their work is conversion! What greater can there be? says some restless reader, almost horror-stricken at our remarks. Well, conversion is the greatest work, as a commencement of the infinite glory of perfected life.

But it is just here that our difficulty lies. We do not yet see that such mode of proclaiming Christian truth is the most effectual mode of bringing the warm energy of life to bear on dead souls, to kindle, revivify, renew unto immortality. We question the character of the results and their endurance. We stand up for the freedom and freeness of ministerial utterance. We think that the Gospel reflects its living energy into men's hearts from many surfaces. But, we do say also, that the light and heat which are thus brought to bear should be direct and pure from the great source. Let the voice of the Christian minister be heard on all subjects which are germane to his great theme. His range is unbounded. But, let the point from which he views such questions as come before him, be ever that on which Christ himself would take his stand. We blame not preachers that they have too much brought the clear enunciation of Christian truth to bear on the great questions which affect us in our social, industrial, political, national relations, but that they have done too little of this. Let the Christian minister speak on all subjects. But let him pour upon each one the light and warmth of impartial Christian principle. It is because Christianity has spoken of commercial immorality, of national sins, of the relations of man to man, when she has, through her preachers, spoken of them at all, with a most uncertain sound, that men have dared to say, that Christian preaching has but its one theme, and must keep to that. Christianity has but one sun; but the beams of that one sun enlighten everything. When we dare to pronounce on any of the questions which affect us as immortal beings, or on any of the questions which occupy men's thoughts in the present, let our utterance be simply Christian, wholly Christian, courageously Christian. That is our grand safeguard. Shall Jamaica, for example, be turned into a shambles, and Christian churches and Christian ministers be silent? Let it be plainly seen that we take our stand on true Christian principle, and from that point of view consider every question that comes before us, utterly apart from sect, denomination, creed, or

party ; and "the ministry of the Word" shall soon take place as the noblest power which our land possesses even in secular things. Let a man of the most moderate abilities take up the great Christian principle, and feel the divine Christian spirit, and, thus prepared and influenced, judge and speak of all things, such a voice would be the voice of a prophet in its directness, simplicity, and loftiness. More of Christian principle brought to bear on the events of the day, on our national action, on the relations between the various gradations in society, on our commercial morality, on our political life, would have much the same effect as the glow of the summer sun full on the drooping frozen waste. It is because men light up their own tapers or hold up their own flaring torches, and insist that thus and thus only is life to be understood in its present relations, that so much narrowness, such a low level of feeling and estimation, such wild ungenial fervour prevail in those regions of thought and action whence the influence and the pronouncement of Christianity are sedulously excluded. Let our sun glow on every question that can concern intelligent man.

There is another thought in regard to this relation to the light and heat of our spiritual life to which we must devote a few sentences. Looking back again over those times of wintry darkness and apathy, we see that as the death and indifference deepen, so also all forms and ceremonies seem to become more gorgeous, more obtrusive. There is thus a relation between the excess of ritualism and the destitution of spiritual energy. The interest of the worshipper fastened on the splendid ceremonies and lost sight of the life-giving truth. And thus we are warned that we exclude Christ not merely by substituting or interposing saint and angel and Virgin, as in the Roman Catholic ritual, but just as completely by the very complication and elaboration of our forms of worship. Yon wintry sun has to pierce thick clouds, and dart his rays along dense strata of cold heavy air. Thus his rays warm me not. So, if the rays of divine truth have to reach me through thick wrappings of rites and ceremonies, they must lose their power. This is the profound objection and repugnance which sensible, earnest persons feel to High Church fancies. You enter a High Church place of worship. You are struck with the beautiful singing and the millinery of the worship ; but it rather reminds one of the remark of the good Scotch lassie. Her very devout mistress sent her one Sunday to one of those very rubrical churches at which she herself attended. On her return from service, the girl was asked how she liked it. "Ou, it's varra bonny," said she, "varra bonny ; but ou, my leddy, it's an awfu' way o' spendin' the Sabbath." So it is. The especial point we have to urge here is, however, that amid all this mass

of cloudy symbolism the saving, vivifying light and heat of the Gospel truth is lost. Some of our Nonconformist brethren have a hankering after such things, at least within moderate bounds. Let us beware lest our complication of worship make it only as a cloudy mass to intercept divine light and heat. Let us sweep away everything which would interfere with full, direct, personal communion with the great Source of life. Let every part of our service be as a minister to lift us nearer to the Sun of our spiritual firmament, or to bring us more directly under His influence. Through every portion of our ritual let the glory of the spiritual sun shine as through a transparent veil. Then we have accomplished what worship was intended to fulfil. More is only an interposed cloud to deaden the vivifying energy.

In all this we have been speaking of the great general aspect of our relation to the Sun of Righteousness. Had we time, how much might be said as to our individual relation. How frequently do we permit clouds, born of our own worldliness or our own sins, to come between us and Him who is our life! How frequently do we yield ourselves to the distractions of life to be whirled far away from our clear direct contact with our source of life and joy! Let us look into our lives, and very often we shall see how from our own carelessness and worldliness has ensued that deprivation of holy light and heat which makes winter in the soul. But our sun is still there. Let us return. We shall enjoy his uninterrupted goodness. He will make summer in our hearts.

THE LIFE OF FREDERICK ROBERTSON.*

TWELVE years have passed since Frederick Robertson, at the age of thirty-seven, was taken to his rest. Comparatively unknown when he died, his name has become, through the influence of his posthumous sermons, a household word with almost all intelligent and educated Christians. Modestly enough, his biographer says, "there would seem to be no apology necessary for presenting to the public the 'Life and Letters' of such a man." The delay in the appearance of the memoir, it is explained, has been unavoidable; in one respect it has been fortunate. The

* Life and Letters of the Rev. Frederick W. Robertson. By the Rev Stopford A. Brooke, M.A. 2 vols. London: Smith & Elder. 1865.

"Sermons" have had time to reach all classes, to interest the most diverse minds, to secure patient attention and thought. The more thoroughly they have been studied, the greater has been the desire excited to know more of the mind from which they sprung. Whence that deep insight into the truth of human nature and of the written Word? What were the sources of that intense and tender love to the Eternal Father, and to His Christ? What was the texture and the training of the soul that always uttered its views of truth with such fearless and unfaltering decision? Those views of truth themselves, often so widely, even painfully, divergent from current beliefs, how were they attained? And whence, in fine, that thrilling undertone of sadness which makes itself heard even amid the boldest and most assured utterances of faith?

These questions now are answered, with many more which those volumes will have suggested to thoughtful minds. The Life is in truth a commentary, exquisitely appropriate throughout, upon the sermons. To understand Robertson's true nature it will henceforth be necessary to study both.

For the biographer, hitherto we believe unknown to literature, has wrought not only with perfect sympathy, but with admirable skill. The volumes deserve to rank with the lives of Arnold, of Foster, and of Buxton. Higher praise we cannot give. If, therefore, we do not even mention Mr. Stopford Brooke again in the brief compass of our article, it must not be thought that we fail to recognize his excellence. Mr. Robertson himself, in one of his letters, remarks of Stanley's Life of Arnold, that no one seemed at first to notice how well the biographer had done his work. Every one was talking of Arnold, not of Stanley. This, he justly adds, was the highest possible tribute to the excellence of the book.

The outward facts of Mr. Robertson's life were few. The son of a soldier, he himself aspired to the military profession. The father, judging from his son's earnest and perhaps precocious piety, was inclined to recommend the Church; meanwhile securing for him, chiefly at the Edinburgh Academy, the advantages of a high education. At the end a cavalry commission was actually applied for, but in the delay of an answer, young Robertson became almost hopeless of success; an accidental circumstance, as men term it, threw him into the companionship of a wise and earnest friend, who strongly urged the claims of a clerical life. The reluctant resolution was at length taken, and Frederick Robertson was entered at Oxford. A fortnight after the die was thus cast, the long expected offer of a commission arrived. Just that brief delay, and the British army would have gained a brave soldier, while the Church of Christ would have

suffered a loss which she never could have known! Robertson himself was glad that the letter had come, for it could never be said that he had entered the Church from failure to find employment elsewhere.

"He was now twenty years old, and accepting somewhat sternly his destiny, he began his University career. Before entering on residence, he spent much time with Mr. Davies. They walked daily together, and his friend, anxious lest he should have forced his inclinations, asked him frequently whether he was satisfied with what had been done. He would never answer directly, but only quietly reply, 'Wait, some day I will tell you.'

"Often (Mr. Davies writes), when passing a soldier in the street, has he tightly pressed my arm, observing, 'Well, so I am to have nothing to do with them;' and at other times, 'Poor fellows, they are but little thought of. few care for their souls.' I can never forget the feeling and energetic manner in which he would quote at length the passage from Coleridge's 'Sibylline Leaves,' dwelling with marked emphasis on the lines—

'As if the soldier died without a wound;
As if the fibres of this godlike frame
Were gored without a pang; as if the wretch
Who fell in battle, doing bloody deeds,
Passed off to heaven, translated and not killed;
As though he had no wife to pine for him,
No God to judge him.'

"It was with great delight that he told me that the application for a commission had been successful, for it would not be said that he went into the church because he could not get into the army.

"During the summer he went up the Wye, and visited Tintern by moonlight. Mr. Davies, who accompanied him, remembers that he always collected the servants of the several inns to evening prayers, and recalls his intense and romantic enjoyment of the scenery; and yet (continues Mr. Davies), with all this poetical sense of life and nature, I never knew anyone who took a more correct view of life, and who was more anxious to deal in a manly and Christian way with its realities. At the time to which I refer I never knew him otherwise than cheerful, and there were times when his spirits were exuberant; times when he was in the mood of thoroughly enjoying everything. With him as I was daily and hourly, I can testify that he was a constant and prayerful student of his Bible. . . . He possessed a very logical mind, and in argument was a close and accurate reasoner. At this time he held firmly what are understood as Evangelical views, and for these he would mildly but perseveringly contend. He advocated strongly the pre-millennial advent of Christ.

But one who was more free from the shibboleths of a party, or more abhorrent from anything like cant, or one who regarded others with a more large-hearted charity, I never knew."—pp. 16, 17.

At Oxford he worked hard and read discursively; chiefly, however, Plato, Aristotle, and Butler. His life was "silent, self-contained, progressive." To qualify himself as an expositor of Scripture, he committed to memory the whole New Testament, in Greek and English. He took part in the discussions at the "Union," but not noticeably. When taking his degree he de-

clined going up for honours, but for his excellence was awarded an honorary "class." Still he retained his evangelical belief and his devotional fervour. The questions which were afterwards to exercise such power over his spirit, had not yet begun to haunt him. The chief intellectual and spiritual temptations that beset him were from the side of high-churchism, and the influence of John Henry Newman. But though, as he afterwards expressed it, brought very near to the edge of the abyss, he recoiled in time, stood his ground firmly, and with an even passionate fervour repelled the Romanizing influence. Thus he passed to the solemn era of his ordination: being set apart as deacon, July 12, 1840, in the twenty-fifth year of his age. His first charge was at Winchester, where he distinguished himself by personal asceticism, and a strict attention to every form of pastoral duty. It was his strong conviction, especially at this period of his life, that his career would be very short, and what he did was with his might.

In the summer of 1841 he quitted Winchester, entered into priest's orders; but, owing to enfeebled health, did not immediately resume ministerial labour. A journey to the Continent in the summer of 1841 was very helpful in recruiting his exhausted frame. In the course of this tour, also, he was married. The summer of 1842 closed the interval of rest, and he undertook a curacy at Cheltenham, the duties of which he discharged for five years. Still his preaching, though very earnest, and heightened in its charm by his fine figure, noble countenance, and melodious voice, was far from yielding full promise of its future greatness. For one thing, he seems to have prepared but slightly, to have occupied himself rather with more private pastoral duties, and to have contented himself with a place in the shade of what he then considered the surpassing excellence of his rector, the Rev. Archibald Boyd, now of Paddington.

At the same time his mind was not idle. He both read and thought deeply, or the subsequent revolution in his views would have been inexplicable. He discovered, too, what has distressed so many other deeply religious minds, that a sentimental evangelical profession is often accompanied by the most utter worldliness. In a fashionable watering-place, like Cheltenham, he was often constrained to see how the utmost apparent devoutness is but made a cloak for frivolity, or worse. An anecdote, characteristic rather of his courage than of his prudence, belongs to this period.

"On one occasion (writes a gentleman who knew him well at Cheltenham), he had been asked to preach at a church where the congregation was chiefly composed of those whom Pope describes as passing from 'a youth of frolics to an old age of cards.' I accompanied him, and listened curi-

ously for his text. It was this, 'Love not the world, nor the things of the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.' The sermon was most impressive and eloquent, and bold in its denunciation. Returning home, he asked me if I thought he was right in preaching it. I answered, that it was very truthful; but, considering the character of the clergyman whose pulpit he occupied by courtesy, and the character of the congregation, not a discreet sermon. It might have been as truthful without apparently setting both minister and people at defiance. 'You are quite right, quite right,' he answered; 'but the truth was this. I took two sermons with me into the pulpit, uncertain which to preach; but, just as I had fixed upon the other, something seemed to say to me, 'Robertson, you are a craven, you dare not speak here what you believe,' and I immediately pulled out the sermon that you heard, and preached it as you heard it.'—pp. 96, 97.

But there was a weight upon his spirit, especially during the later days of his Cheltenham career, which none then could understand, and the full pressure of which is but partially disclosed, even to readers of his biography. In a word, he had utterly lost his old belief. His thoughts and speculations had done something to unsettle his mind; the sudden breaking up of a cherished friendship—as we presume with Mr. Boyd—had done more. He resigned his curacy, and wandered away in loneliness to the mountain lands of Europe. Chaos was in his soul, not despair, for amid the strife and agony of mental conflict he still held fast by this, *it must be right to do right*. Every landmark of doctrine was violently torn away; only the landmarks of morality remained. Clouds and darkness were round about his God; yet righteousness and judgment were the habitation of His throne. In the morbid emotions of the time he felt that his ministry at Cheltenham had been throughout a failure, that his theology had been mistaken and unsatisfactory, that as a clergyman he had been in a false position. To Mr. Robertson he writes, from Schaffhausen, October 11, 1846: "More and more I feel that I am not a minister, and never can be one." A letter to a friend, a little later from Heidelberg, gives an affecting picture of his storm-tossed soul:—

"Whatever mental trials I may experience, you are not responsible for any. I have heard you state difficulties, but never argue for them; and the difficulties could not come upon my mind for the first time—of a man who had read theological and philosophical controversy—long before, with painful interest—a man who, at different times, has lived in the atmosphere of thought, in which Jonathan Edwards, Plato, Lucretius, Thomas Brown, Carlyle, Emerson, and Fichte lived—who has steeped his soul and memory in Byron's strong feelings—who has walked with Newman years ago to the brink of an awful precipice, and chosen rather to look upon it calmly, and know the worst of the secrets of the darkness, than recoil with Newman, in fear and tenderness, back to the infallibility of Romanism. Such a man is not likely to have been influenced by a few casual statements of difficulties which he had read of a thousand times before. I knew well what the state of your mind *had* been. I thought I knew what it *is*; and, therefore, never,

except in a walk once, in answer to a searching question, did I ever hint to you what was the attraction to my mind in such books. A man, as it has been well said, 'ought to burn his own smoke, if he cannot convert it into clear flame.' For this reason, I shall not enter upon these points, except superficially. I am quite sure that what you say is true about getting truth—at least truth enough—at last, and I am quite willing to struggle on in twilight until the light comes. True, manly struggle cannot fail. I know that, only a man must struggle alone. His own view of truth, or rather his own way of viewing it, and that alone, will give him rest. He can only adopt the views of other minds for a time; and so long as his own is inert, the help that he gets directly from others generally does no good. Indirect, casual hints sometimes do much. I have never said so much as this to anyone in England; and, of course, you will kindly not even hint it. Here, in Germany, I have conversed much and freely on the points of difficulty.

I have found minds here that understand me if they cannot help me, and in the conviction that a treasure lies near me in German literature, I am digging away, night and day, at the superincumbent earth, in order hereafter to get at it. Indeed, I have already plunged into it, perhaps too suddenly, considering my rudimental acquaintance with the language. Some things I am certain of, and these are my *Ursachen*, which cannot be taken away from me. I have got so far as this. Moral goodness and moral beauty are realities, lying at the basis, and beneath all forms of the best religious expressions. They are no dream, and they are not mere utilitarian conveniences. That suspicion was an agony once. It is passing away. After finding littleness where I expected nobleness, and impurity where I thought there was spotlessness, again and again I despaired of the reality of goodness. But in all that struggle, I am thankful to say, the bewilderment never told upon my conduct. In the thickest darkness I tried to keep my eye on nobleness and goodness, even when I suspected they were only Will-o'-the-Wisps. Indeed, I startled an Epicurean philosopher some time ago, here in Germany, with the vehemence with which I maintained this. He was defending Goethe's views and life, and I poured out my indignation in such a storm of fury, that he quite cowered before the blast, and between seven and eight next morning anxiously begged me to believe that he had overstated his own views. I had rather be a Stoic in hell-fire than an Epicurean on his principles, or Goethe's, if they be Goethe's. I am anxious to set you at rest upon this point, for really you are responsible for nothing. Indeed, a man must have been profoundly and incredibly ignorant of literature, if these things had presented themselves to him in a few conversations in a new light. As to the ministry, I am in infinite perplexity. To give it up seems throwing away the only opportunity of doing good in this short life that is now available to me. Yet to continue it, when my whole soul is struggling with meaning that I cannot make intelligible—when I am perpetually bewildering people, and saying the thing I do not mean—to go on teaching and preaching when my own heart is dark, and lacks the light I endeavour to impart—when I feel as if it lay upon me, like a destiny, to speak truth, and not as Cassandra, to be disbelieved, but to be for ever unintelligible to my brother man—is very wretched."—pp. 119—121.

Had he not found some Christian work to do in an English chaplaincy at Heidelberg, his reluctance to resume the character of a pastor might have proved unconquerable. This employment, however, proved of priceless value to him—partly in delivering him from himself, partly in bringing him into association with some kindly, congenial natures—but chiefly in the

assurance it gave him that he might yet be of some use in the world. "I have had," he writes to his wife, "more proofs of my ministry telling here already than during my whole stay in Cheltenham." This was the turning point; and when he turned his footsteps towards England again, it was with the determination once more to engage in the Master's public service.

In May, 1847, he obtained from Bishop Wilberforce an appointment at St. Ebbe's, Oxford. It is honourable to both that the charge was entrusted to Robertson after his explicit statement of disbelief in the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. His ministry here lasted only some three months; but the period was long enough to show his power. He laid hold of the poor at once; very soon the undergraduates rushed to hear him in crowds. But Trinity Chapel, Brighton, was now offered; and though Robertson at first declined, as esteeming himself bound in honour to Oxford, the Bishop himself decided that the call should be accepted. In August, 1847, therefore, that marvellous ministry began which, in August, 1853, was closed for ever by death.

At Brighton, from the first Robertson stood alone—partly from the theological isolation in which his late prolonged, but undisclosed, processes of thought had placed him—partly from his daring violation of all conventionalisms when the truth and right, as he conceived them, were in question. The "Evangelical" and the "Puseyite," the fashionable loungee of the watering-place, and the more earnest frequenter of the Nonconformist chapel, were alike puzzled. Still he at once secured an audience. "The utter hopelessness of being listened to," he writes, "is past." For one thing, he immediately laid hold upon the working-classes of the town. He won them, not by any unmanly concession to their prejudices, not by flattery, nor by "descending to their level," but by meeting them frankly as a brother man, with rebuke as bold and opposition as strenuous when he thought there was need, as his help was hearty and fraternal. One of the earliest gifts he received was a set of church services for the desk from the servants in his congregation. Of the "Brighton Working-Men's Institute" he was the originator, the life and soul; while his speech in opposition to the introduction of infidel publications to its reading-room was long remembered as one of the most daring and successful efforts of modern oratory. He gathered around him warm hearts and willing helpers. "There never lived a truer friend." On the outskirts of that nearest circle were many others, who strove to comprehend him, sought his guidance, admired and criticised by turns. Many of these were intelligent women: some of them in his congregation, others occasional hearers or correspondents—

his "muslin episcopate," as he used to call them playfully. To their enquiries or criticisms, their doubts or misgivings, or appeals for guidance on all sorts of matters, secular or religious, we owe many of the most charming letters of these volumes. Some of his literary criticisms, thus thrown out, are very fine. We can only make room for one :—

"I fancy character may be measured, both in depth and quality, by the poet who is the chosen favourite. He is a kind of Nilometer to mark the depth at different distances on the river. A man's Nilometer in the higher regions may be Shelley. The wild and marvellous stream is then still in the air region, finding a home among clouds, cutting a narrow way through clefts of rock, flowing for many hundred yards together under frozen patches of snow—a strange and beautiful life in the waste of the eternal silence, issuing out clear and pure and cold, a little higher up from the delicately-blue cavern of the glacier. Even in its lower and earthlier flow, the stream will appear to hold mysterious connection, as if by invisible sympathy, with its source; and even the inarticulate murmurs of its daily ripples will seem but the cadences which ought to be heard only in those still and solemn realms.

"Down in the plains, in the less unearthly part of its course, the watermark of such a man will stand at Burns. A strong, swift flow, so deep as to scarcely seem to move on the surface; somewhat turbid, but the very earth which discolours it will often be purer than the snow which falls into other rivers direct from the clouds of heaven.

"Between these two regions of such a man's life, Wordsworth will mark the height and temperature of the stream in a part of its course which will be at present invisible, being lost, as is the case with some rivers, for many miles underground. But when this lost power of life shall reappear, Wordsworth will only mark the depth and temperature near the banks. The central depths he will not be able to sound."—Page 176, vol. i.

Occasionally he was annoyed by the pertinacity of good people who strove to "set him right," as the phrase is. One lady had wearied him with her importunate and impertinent homilies, until indifference was his only resource. Indignantly at last she asked, "Do you know what 'don't care' came to, sir?" "Yes, madam," was the grave reply, "He was crucified on Calvary." This bespeaks the man. The cross which he believed to have been laid on him he had resolved to take up; and he bore it fearlessly, though his heart often bled when associates misunderstood or friends forsook.

We may give a specimen of the kind of discussion to which he was often subject. In speaking of Channing he had often, in his large-hearted way, expressed admiration for the man as, albeit unconsciously, and with a certain intellectual repugnance, holding on to spiritual catholic truth. This led to the following scene :—

"A lady called to-day, and when she came into the drawing room she put her hand on Channing's Memoirs. 'I am sorry to see you read this book, Mr. Robertson.' I replied, 'Dr. Channing was one of the highest of his species. For a minister to refuse to read such a book would be miserable.

I am not so sensitively afraid of error as that. I throw myself on the Father of Lights, read all, and trust that He will answer a desire for light. An immoral book I refuse to read, but a book containing merely false doctrine, or what is supposed to be false, I dare not refuse to read; or else I could not with any consistency ask a Roman Catholic to read any book of Protestant heresy.' 'But Dr. Channing could not be a good man, because he did not believe in Christ.' 'Pardon me, he did. He loved Christ. I wish I adored Him half as much as Dr. Channing did.' 'But he denied that he adored Him.' 'I cannot help that. If the lowliest reverence and the most enthusiastic love constitute adoration, Dr. Channing worshipped Christ. I care not what a man says. His homage was more adoring than that of nine out of ten who call Him God. Besides, do you remember the story of the two sons, one of whom said, 'I go, sir,' and went not; the other refused to go, and went? What care I if Dr. Channing adores, saying that he does not adore.' She replied, 'I believe he adores himself much more.' I returned that some passages in his Diary expressed the deepest self-abasement. 'Well, probably he had a high ideal; he was mortified at not obtaining that before the world.' 'Do you recollect,' I answered, 'how the Pharisees got over a similar difficulty to yours? There was a holy man before them, and because they could not deny the beauty of his deeds, they found out that they were done from diabolical motives, for Beelzebub's cause. Take care! Do you recollect what sin they committed by that—seeing good and refusing to recognise it as good? It is a perilous thing to set out with the assumption that a doctrine is true, and that all who do not hold that doctrine are bad. Christ reverses that order of procedure. 'Believe me for the works' sake.' I would just as soon disbelieve in God, as contemplate a character like Dr. Channing's and hesitate to say whether that was a divine image or not, whether God had accepted him or not, whether those deeds and that life were the product of evil or the fruit of the heavenly spirit.'—Page 284, vol. i.

Robertson could not help being a popular preacher; yet it was a character he loathed. He knew full well that many who admired him most were attracted by that which was most accidental and least valuable in his ministry. "I see what rhetoric does," he writes, "and what it seems to do, and I thoroughly despise it." Still an increasing number came to listen and learn. The young men of the congregation, towards the close of his ministry, expressed their obligations to him in words which thrilled every fibre of his heart. He needed such support—not then alone; for impelled by what he believed to be light and guidance from Heaven, he entered into fields of thought and adopted forms of belief most repugnant, and even inexplicable to the ordinary religious mind. To a particular six months' section of his ministry belongs the development of his views on the Sabbath, on Baptism, on Inspiration, and on the Atonement. The wonderful sermons in which he treats these themes were preached often with intense mental pain. He knew that he should astonish, shock, alienate; but not for a moment did he falter. "I would rather be leading a forlorn hope," he would say, "rather than go up and preach all this." But it never occurred to him not, therefore, to preach it—to confine

himself to safer themes, and to lay himself out for the delight of his hearers. No : he was throughout and to the last the soldier, and transferred to his ministry the same spirit which, as he never scrupled to declare, would have led him by preference up to the fortress of Sobraon or the bloody field of Chillianwallah.

In a second paper we hope to speak more at large of the influences which appear from the Memoir to have fashioned Mr. Robertson's special theology, as well as to offer some criticism of his belief on certain important matters. We may also refer to that brief section of his life's story which remains to be told. Meanwhile, we tender to Mr. Brooke our thanks for his faithful and touching narrative, all the more heartily because of the bitter and wicked spirit in which it has already been received by men who disgrace the Evangelical name, and the like of whom drove Robertson, unhappily, from Evangelicalism.

(To be continued.)

NURSERY NURTURE.—No. II.

FAMILY PRAYER.

“Milk for Babies.”

“NURSERY PRAYER” would have been given to this paper, as its title, if we had not been afraid lest the word “nursery” might mislead some of our readers as to our opinion, respecting the place in children's homes, where the common prayer should be accustomed to be made. The word would, doubtless, have suggested the idea which we have conceived of the present topic—that the family prayer in children's homes should be a child's service—but we decided upon retaining the more familiar and comprehensive epithet, lest it should be supposed that we had fallen into a great mistake.

The force of the adage, “a place for everything, and everything in its place,” is felt as much by those who have the management of the young, as by any others whose business by its extent and variety seems to demand the help of every convenience, and the strictest adherence to a settled system. The place for children is the nursery, and if it be, as we imagine it should be, the best room in the house, they will be found, as a rule, to be better and happier there than they are anywhere else.

Children are, however, like ourselves. They are creatures of circumstances. They have like feelings and passions with us.

We cannot afford to forget, in our own cases, that we form associations. We cannot help the influence that some places and scenes have over us. Certain trains of thought are suggested which invariably lead away our minds, and there are some feelings which seem to be inseparable from some rooms. There must be a change of place, if there is to be a change of thought and feeling. We can only make the best of ourselves when we make the best of our circumstances, and we shall have to give our little ones every advantage if we are to succeed in our present effort, which is to lead them to worship with us Him who is a Spirit, in spirit and in truth. Other things, besides the adaptation of place, must combine to make the effort a success; anything, even a trifle, may render it a failure.

A nursery is a necessity. It is, like many other necessities, a blessing in disguise. But it is to the little ones, though it may be large and lofty, and full of playthings, what the school-room is to the elder children; and what the shop, or the office, or the study is to ourselves. The boy rushes out of the school-room, the hands we employ drop their tools and leave the factory, at the stroke of the hour for closing, and after the day's business, the master is only too ready to turn his back on the walls and furniture of the office that he knows too well. Children are always glad to leave the nursery and to come down stairs. They are tired of it, and being tired, are sure to be tiresome. The first step taken, then, in the direction of the family altar, is in our favour. We are often good when we are happy, and the little ones, being pleased, are likely to behave themselves. There is not only a present but a future benefit connected with this change of place and scene. Having pleasant associations with the service, they may not only be induced to pray with us, but to pray with themselves, and when we are passed away, to pray with our children's children.

Coming into that part of the home which looks more like "the Father's house," after having paid all that attention to cleanliness which is next to godliness, which we feel to be due to those who live with us, and which they are taught to regard as absolutely necessary; rejoiced at being where we are, our children will be as ready and able to worship with us, *cæteris paribus*, as we sometimes feel we shall be, when we are summoned to leave this weary world, and, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, shall see our Father in heaven, and be with Him where He is.

The time for the service is to be chosen on the same principle as the place. The circumstances of the children are to be considered. In fact, in this as in all things, our cue is to be taken from them. Our plans are to be accommodated to their powers.

A careful observation of the possibilities of childhood, and the special limitations of each home, will easily and certainly acquaint us with the best time for the commencement and the close of such a service as we are contemplating. It is as much from a want of thought, as a lack of talent, that many have experienced so much difficulty in sustaining the interest of their households in family worship. Success in this, as in most other undertakings, depends upon what those who fail consider to be trifles. For instance, where the inmates of a home are adults, the best time for prayer is before meals, but where there are children, and especially where there is a child in arms, there is not much likelihood of securing quietness except the little ones have eaten and drunk.

It is to be feared that there is some reason to believe in the supposition that we are failing now-a-days in our family prayer. In one or two instances we have known it to have been relinquished, the heads of the households confessing that it had become in their homes a mockery. There are two cases in which we could give evidence. In the one, the children are grown up; in the other, they are of tender years. While believing in the necessary and intimate connection that exists between family religion and family worship, we should shrink from summarily settling these cases, by attributing to a want of home piety this absence of its manifestation. It is possible that in some cases there may not have been that kind or measure of religious feeling, which is required in all those who have to lead the devotions of others. Any religious engagement which is perpetually recurring at regular intervals, is a severe test of the character of our Christianity. A daily service is very apt to become a mere performance of a duty, and where there is a possibility, it will be omitted, the burden of perfunctoriness being too heavy to be borne by those who officiate, and the weariness and monotony becoming intolerable to those who have been obliged to assist.

The canon of our Lord, "God is a Spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth," is as applicable to family prayer as it is to any other. If we are not worshipping God in spirit in our homes, we are worshipping Him in vain, and shall soon not worship Him at all. There is more in these words of our Lord, as indeed there is in all that came from His mouth, than we may at first suspect. The spirit of prayer gives us not only power with God, but power with others. Spiritual worship is not only acceptable to God, but it is found to be acceptable to those who join in it. Further: having the spirit, we shall not only have power with God, and with our little ones, knowing, as we shall presently see, what things to pray for, and how to pray,

as we ought; but, being possessed by the spirit, we shall be willing and able to cause all things to work together for the success of our home worship. For instance, being led by the spirit, we shall lead a home life, in order that, little by little, we may accumulate home knowledge and home power. We shall lay out ourselves for our children with all that purpose, persistence, and genius which ever characterise those who are in earnest.

Family prayer is one of the many branches of family religion, and, like the rest, it will be fruitless, and soon wither and die, if the root of the matter be not in the home. It is but one of the many elements in Nursery Nurture, and as each division of our subject comes under our consideration, we shall find that while it comprises diversities of gifts, differences of administration, and diversities of operations, it is yet a unity, and that the same laws are to be seen in operation in its various spheres. We live to learn that none of these laws can be disobeyed with impunity, and that they are as inseparable as they are imperative. If one part of Nursery Nurture suffers, the whole suffers with it.

Our choice of a house, as we hinted in our first paper, is to be determined by our children. If they be young, there must be a nursery; and as we shall never regret making any known law our guiding principle, so, as our children are ever to be to us in all things our first consideration, the house is likely to become a home, if the turning of our taking it has been decided by "the children's room."

The same law will be in operation if we are called to choose our place of residence. Very few will find that they can afford to live in the suburbs. Any whose business lies at home may live almost anywhere they like, for it will never interfere with their accumulation of home power, or prevent their exhibition of home piety. But if a suburban life involves, as it mostly does, our being with our children only one day in the week, why then, together with other modern customs which can only be observed at the expense of our homes, it must be avoided. We must live with our children if we are to love them, and they are to love us. If we were to become strangers at home, there would be many things with which we could not intermeddle. Amongst these would be family prayer. Perhaps this modern custom of living away from business has had more influence than some imagine on their home feeling, their home power, and their home religion. Nothing is plainer than that it must affect the point before us—the time of family prayer. Where the father leaves at so early an hour that there is either no time to hold the service at all, or only to hold it in a hurry, and where he returns so late that there is no possibility of holding it at night, the children being tired or asleep, we can easily understand that the family altar is

never reared, or, if the attempt be made, it is soon in ruins, the fire being unfed with home feeling, and ever going out.

It is the old tale over again. Nothing can be done without taking a great deal of pains. Everything, at any rate, in Nursery Nurture, is full of labour; and those who will not accept this ordinance will be always finding it a trouble, and be ever speaking of their children as troublesome.

It is possible that there is less family prayer than we imagine, it is certain that there is less than there appears to be. If the nursery element is to enter into the home worship where there are children, we are afraid that there are many homes without family prayer. It is piteous to think of the wrongs of the young. There are many children living in good houses who have no homes. Many who are fed and clothed and educated, are suffering from parental neglect. There are other little things besides those in our factories who are treated as men and women. Some pious parents and some Sunday-school teachers will perhaps one day see that they will have much to answer for. People with very good intentions may do very great harm. The long services at which children are obliged by their elders to assist, with nothing whatever to compensate them for their struggle against their natural restlessness, may, perhaps, be of some avail to adults, but they are certainly fraught with fatal influence upon the young. We shall have something, presently, to say about "sitting still," and "keeping quiet;" and we do not ignore the fact that we cannot avoid doing some wrong whenever we do right. But we would now, and with all the earnestness of which we are capable, draw the attention of those of our readers who have to conduct family worship to the fact, that their success will depend not only upon the time and the place, but the manner of their doing so.

We are of opinion that the admitted neglect of public worship, and the supposed neglect of family prayer, may be attributed largely to the early recollections of weariness which are associated in many minds with the worship of God. There is a strange aversion that many have to enter the house of God, and which more have to open His word, which cannot be satisfactorily accounted for by the ordinary solution of the depravity of our nature. It is well known that there are those who have been so disgusted with some food, although it was good to eat, when they were children and obliged to take it, that they never touch it now, when they can do what they like. To be forced, as a Sunday scholar, to sit still for an hour and a half, after having been kept for the same time at school;—to be forced to be quiet every day, and to appear to listen to reading and prayer in a language which needs to be interpreted, is to be

placed in circumstances that are sure to be held in lasting remembrance, and to be accompanied with pernicious and enduring results.

Family prayer, where there are children, must be a child's service. If the Bible is to be read, it must be translated. We must make or use a child's version of the Scriptures. There should be milk for babes. Just as our Father uses our language, and our way of putting things when He puts His will before us, so we must use our children's language; we must speak as a child, if we would put His will before them. Here, again, is the law of labour, and it is more difficult to be simple than some may imagine. It is easy to be childish, but we must take some pains to be childlike.

There must be a selection of passages as well as of words. Nothing, at first sight, seems to be a better plan than to read the Bible through, just as it is, at family prayer. This is certainly an improvement on the system adopted in a home we know of accompanying it with "Henry's Commentary." But there is a more excellent way. There are portions of the Scriptures which seem to have been written, and they doubtless were, for children. Take, for instance, those which contain the life of our Lord. We venture upon offering an example of what we mean :—

MARK V. 21—43.

"Jesus had been in a ship on the sea. And when He had landed from the ship He found a great many people on the shore who came and crowded about Him. While He was talking and walking with the people, one of the great men who lived at the place where He was, ran up to Him, and fell down on his knees, and began to beg and to pray. He said: 'I have a little girl at home, my own child, who is very ill, and is going to die. Oh, will you come! If you would only put your hands on her, and touch her, she would get well. If you came she would live.' So Jesus went with the man, and as He went the crowds went with Him. Now while they were going on the road to the great man's house, a poor woman who had been ill for twelve years, and had suffered a great many things from a great many doctors, and had spent all her money and was no better, but only worse, when she heard that Jesus was in the crowd she pushed through the people, and came behind and laid hold of Christ's cloak, for she said, 'If I can but touch His cloak, I shall get well.' And in a minute her sickness left her, and she felt that she was quite well.

"Jesus, knowing what had been done, turned round on the crowd, and asked, 'Who touched my cloak?' And His disciples said to Him, 'Why do you ask who touched you, do you not see all the people pressing upon you?' And Jesus looked

round to see her who had done this thing. But the woman, frightened and trembling, knowing that it was her, and that she had stole a blessing, came and fell down and told Him all the truth. And Jesus said to her, 'Daughter, you believed that if you could only touch my cloke you would get well; because you believed, I forgive you, go in peace, and keep well.'

"While He was talking to the woman, some servants came from the great man's house and told Him that his little girl was dead, and that it was of no use now for Jesus to go any further. As soon as Jesus heard the message, he said to the man, 'Do not be frightened, only believe.' And Jesus would not let the crowd follow Him, but only Peter and James, and John the brother of James. And He came to the house, and He saw crowds of people weeping and crying. And when He was come in He said to them, 'Why do you make this noise? why do you cry? The little girl is not dead, she is asleep.' And all the people laughed at Him. But when He had put them all out, he took the father and the mother of the little girl, and the disciples, and went into the room where the little girl was lying. And He took the little girl by her hand and said to her, 'Talitha cumi,' which means, 'Little darling, get up.' And in a moment the little girl got up and walked about, for she was twelve years old. And they all cried out with wonder. And Jesus told them to be quiet, and to give the little girl something to eat."

We are not willing to give a form of prayer. Speaking broadly, we may say that we do not believe in forms, at any rate in a home. Prayers, where there are children, are to be offered on the same principle as the Scriptures are to be read, and any parent, who lives very near to God, and very near to his little ones, will find that he is able to pray with them. His home life will fill his heart with an abundance of thought and feeling which he will be only too ready to turn into prayer. If we are training our children to believe that their real Father is in heaven, and that we have nothing for them but what He gives, if we are in the habit of associating everything with Him, then we shall find in the fulness and variety of every season, and of every day, a well-spring of prayer which will be everlasting and always fresh.

There is sometimes to be noticed in the inner life of our homes as well as in the outer life in our world, a curious mingling of things grave and gay, of things sacred and things so-called profane. Our last hint must be received with that recollection. It is offered to those only who have homes, and who love them, and who are led by their love to wish to be all together at the times when the family gather. It is a hint about "sitting still," and "keeping quiet."

We had not long been parents before we found "the difficulty of the baby!" A while we submitted to its despotism, and allowed ourselves to be the sport of its humours. Matters were, however, becoming serious, when, on a day ever to be remembered, we lighted, by accident, on a discovery. The child was laid, unwittingly, on its back on a table, and it seemed to enjoy, for the nonce, the position. The moment was improved. Efforts, the inspiration of the crisis, were made to occupy its attention. They succeeded, and the child seemed to forget its restlessness. This was the origin of one of our most useful home institutions. Every child in the home has been thus induced to be still. The name, familiar now in our mouth as a household word, given to this ordinance, is "Tables!" Many a time, for the fun of the thing, at the magic sound, a whole string of children have laid themselves flat on their backs on the floor, and we have laughed who have won them to acquire a habit of control over their natural restlessness. This precious gift of "sitting still," will not have to rust in them unused in after life; and it has, in combination with other things, rendered it possible for us to have all our children around us when we have our family prayer.

DARWINISM.*

MY DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 14th reminds me (though indirectly) that I have neglected, till now, to thank you for getting me elected a Fellow of the Ethnological Society of London. About the same time, another friend wished to propose me as a member of the Anthropological, without, however, obtaining my decided sanction. I did not, of course, refuse membership, I only took time to consider. The Anthropological Society is, or, at any rate, many prominent members of it are very fast philosophers, travelling with express speed to the firm maintenance of the theory that man is ape-sprung, the ape-ancestor being the *ultima hæres* to some louse-monad, the great-grandfather louse being in turn descended from a mere cell. In fact, by these philosophers, Darwin himself is surpassed. And they seem greatly to represent the society itself in men's eyes.

* A letter addressed by W. H. G. to S. J. M. Esq.

Between ourselves, I shall let you have a piece of my mind, and I know that you will respect the *entre nous* communication, whatever you may think of my opinion on the subject which I shall touch on, and whether you shall agree with me or (perhaps the more probable alternative) entirely disagree.

The question as to the fixity of species—the question, in other words, of the truth (or the falsity) of the Darwinian hypothesis—involves, as it seems to me, points which are of much more consequence than can be any question of pure science, considered in and by itself. A rat, or a certain fish, says Darwin, if you confine the quadruped in dark, underground caves, and if you confine the fish in unwholesome reservoirs, that had never seen the light, will lose, first, the powers of vision,—then the eye diminishes, and recedes, and hollows take the place where eyes had been, and the optic nerves themselves do, in process of time, become dubious, and indistinct, and prepare to disappear. “A new species of rat, this troglodyte!” exclaim Darwinians; “A new variety of fish, this swimmer in dusky tanks!” cry these Lamarckians. Now, waiving the point whether loss of organism be progressive by natural selection, or be, like some motions of crabs, only progressive motion backwards; and allowing to Darwinians all premises which their actual facts are alleged to warrant; allowing, in short (for argument’s sake), that fixity of species is not in nature—then behold what follows! Man is no longer something in nature that cannot evanesce. Man, as he is to-day, may be (I know a philosophical friend who says he will be) a flying animal in his next *saltus* in his progressive motion forwards. See, now, how this affects the doctrine of the incarnation of our Lord,—that incarnation which we record when we write 1865.

I have no hesitation in confessing to you my belief in the Son of Man—in that Son of God “who took not on him the nature of angels: but He took on Him the seed of Abraham,” “the Son of Abraham,” being also the “Son of Adam, which was the Son of God.” In fine, the Son of God “was made flesh;” and human flesh, or man, He could not have been made for ever, if fixity of species had no existence. This is very clear, and to every person with capabilities of perceiving logical sequences the thing will be obvious enough.

Now, years and years ago, I came, on independent grounds, and for sufficient reasons, to a final conclusion on those points which are the very fundamentals of Christian faith, and with the bulk of civilized men, for nearly nineteen hundred years, I can recite the Apostles’ Creed, without a sardonic grin and internal incredulity.

But perhaps I am sorely troubling you by forcing you, a genuine son of natural science, to attend to what so many philosophers in our day regard as "old wives' fables."

I intend to reply to your letter before many days elapse.
Meantime, I remain, &c.,

W. G.

[NOTE.—Few men know better than the writer, of this letter, that the spheres of science and religion (or faith) are, and are likely long to remain, wholly distinct; and that, therefore, questions of science must be discussed with scientific men on scientific principles alone. And he is also fully aware that, even on the ground which science claims as her own, those processes and conclusions which *intelligent* Christians, as Christians, resent, can be, and are, satisfactorily discussed. But he knows how many there are in these days who, having neither time nor opportunity, and perhaps not the ability, to pursue the investigation, are yet sorely perplexed by some of the prematurely and too confidently proclaimed results of scientific research. Now to all such persons it may be a legitimate satisfaction to rest on "those things which" they already know deserve to be "most surely believed among us;" confident that if Christianity be true, nothing really inconsistent with it can permanently stand.—ED.]

OFF TO NORWAY.

CHAPTER IV.

SCENERY OF THE GUDBRANDSDAL—THE BEAR QUESTION—A PETULANT
PIGE—EPITAPHIUM—THE IDOL—FIRST SIGHT OF THE DOVRE
—A DESCENDANT OF HAROLD HAARFAGER'S.

I HAVE already described the carriage, which is the traveller's conveyance in Norway, and which he drives himself, unless he chooses to hand the reins to the skyds-karl, whereby he rids himself of all responsibility. I drove some five hundred miles, and have reason to speak well of the little Norsk horses. Down hill is their forte. The vehicle is light, the horse sure-footed, and down hill we go at a pace to take away the breath of a novice. But I never saw a broken-kneed horse, and you soon learn to have full faith in the animal; and although your road may often be along and down a mountain side, with a foaming river at the base, and you seem to be going headlong into it, yet you are quite sure the little horse knows all about it, and that a sudden turn in the road will occur just at the right moment. I used to say, after some fresh exploit of the kind.

that I would let a Norsk horse go full trot with me down the dome of St. Paul's, if he chose, sure he'd hold his own.

But the boys, who have a certain control allowed by law, are generally resolute not to let you over-drive or over-heat the horse. And as for the first few days of travel the heat was distressing, these boys would suddenly make the sound I have alluded to, in a former chapter, to the horse, "brhwhr-r-r-p;" the horse would pull up instantly; and in a moment the boy would be hanging about his neck, muttering some evidently not very complimentary remarks about the driver.

For several stages our road lay beside the river Logen, which empties itself into the Miosen lake, and as it has its rise among the mountains which run down the middle of Norway from North to South, its course is not a long one, and the fall is great, so that its rapidity is very noticeable. The fact is, the rivers are alive. They do not so much flow, or even run, as leap and gallop. I often thought, when driving in the same direction, that the stream went quite as fast as I did. Indeed the rush is that of a mountain current. And you come to no end of "falls," some of them very picturesque, and some very grand. And what with every variety of mountain stream, from little silver threads winding down the rocky and wooded sides, to torrents leaping, and foaming, and dashing from ledge to ledge, the traveller by and by begins to be somewhat fastidious, and passes with a glance by many a fall which at home would fix him for hours in admiration and delight.

Till you have crossed the Dovre-Fjeld you scarcely meet the kind of scenery you perhaps anticipated. For the Gudbrandsdal, the long valley through which the river Logen flows, is deservedly admired for its varied beauty rather than for grandeur or sublimity. And I can easily believe travellers of more extensive and diversified experience than myself who say, "It is doubtful whether any other river can show such a constant succession of beautiful scenery."

The government road is good. And the traveller driving northward has, for the most part, on his right hand rocks rising often perpendicularly, or rocky mountains more gradually rearing their irregular sides to the skies, covered with forests where possible for trees to grow, and with countless rills, or larger streams, falling and tumbling and tossing themselves down from the summit fed by still unmelted snow. Below him, sparkling and flashing in the blazing sun, winds the broad and rapid river, with every variety of bank. Beyond it, after a gradually sloping upland, presenting to the traveller the most fertile and best cultivated strip of land in Norway, and dotted with the little picturesque wooden homes of the peasant-pro-

prietors, like our miners' cottages in the Forest of Dean, the bold hills or mountains rise to the height of one, two, or three thousand feet. The road is bordered with turf and grass, and flowers of every hue add their own happy charm. The atmosphere is purity itself. Sometimes for a whole day I saw not even one wreath of curling smoke from a single cottage. The purity of the air alone was worth all the fatigue of the trip. It was bliss merely to breathe.

At the stations we fared pretty well. Always in answer to the question, "Hvad kan de give os at spise?" (what can you give us to eat?) there was sure to come the word "Fisk" (read k as h, and you have it) till we got to almost hate the sound. It is all very well to say, you can always get salmon or trout in the neighbourhood of the rivers; but let the only accompaniment be butter simply turned into clear yellow oil, so that you prefer your fish without, and then with nothing but salt and pepper and, perhaps, black bread, salmon does not convey to the gustatory nerves by any means the same impression that it does at home. At one station, very comfortable, with two beds in the room of course, the table-cloth snowy white, I saw on a side table a huge bowl of strawberries, and another mighty one of cream; and having travelled far under a burning sun, and refreshed myself with a bathe, I was ready to bless everybody about me at the sight of it. When the Phillis—not "neat-handed," for the hands of many of them are huge paws—removed our plates, after some sort of very palatable hot meat, I saw her at that side table preparing the spoons that had been used, to do duty for the strawberries and cream; but by a process not very generally adopted I fancy in England, however much it may be recommended for its simplicity. My reader,—she simply licked them! whereby, not only were the spoons well cleaned, you may be sure, but the maid herself had an evidently gratifying taste of the gravy which had been so delectable to ourselves. I have often found in travelling it is not wise to be too curious. And, indeed, there are many occasions in life when it is best to shut your eyes. However, seeing this pretty little bit of by-play, I took my measures accordingly.

One of the very first things I noted on my first day's drive was a huge bear-skin hung out to dry. Indeed, nothing as you proceed is more common. Bear-skins here, bear-skins there, bear-skins everywhere; but what does the reader suppose was the next object that fixed my eye? Why, exposed in a window, by way of intimation that it was a shop, there hung—your pardon, ladies, I mean no offence—a crinoline! And I mention

it simply because the juxtaposition of these two articles may be taken as symbolic of the present state of Norway. It is the transition period—the bear-skin-and-crinoline age. In almost every cottage I entered, on the large bed frames, or boxes rather, there were sure to be bear-skins for coverlets; and in almost every vand-huus one or two large full ones hanging up; for the most part brown.

Some of my juvenile friends at home were very anxious on my return to know whether I had seen any bears. But to their queries I responded by another, What is a bear? which is a poser; and I was surely safe in affirming that, over and over again, I had seen all that there was to see of a bear; but at last was driven to the humiliating confession that, unfortunately, I had never encountered a live bear. But then I shuffled over my own evidently too safe adventure, and fixed attention on the fact that I had travelled subsequently through the very districts where, in summer, the bears come prowling about for what they can get, and that in that region I actually passed close by the cottage of a hunter who had, in that very neighbourhood, killed between twenty-five and thirty with his own hand. Was not this almost as good as killing them myself?

I drove about fifty miles that day, from Lillehammer to Listad, and passing no towns or villages, but only the stations, Aronsveen, Holmen, Bakkejordet, Skjeggstad. Before leaving the hotel at Lillehammer in the morning, I had sought the good mother in the family apartment for a little womanly service, and was somewhat surprised to see a piano open in the room. I induced a girl of thirteen, though with some difficulty, to play to me, and great was Mamma's delight at my pleasure. But she tried to make me understand that she had an elder "datter" who could play much better; and on her entrance I persuaded her, chiefly, I must confess, by pantomime, to allow me to lead her to the instrument, when she played some very fine pieces of Mendelssohn's and Beethoven's. But crinoline is an easier effort of civilization than music, and I saw no piano after that.

As the evening came on thunder rumbled among the mountains, and thunder-clouds rolled along their bare bosoms, adding gloriously to the scene. I began to feel new force, too, in the old words, "The strength of the hills is His also." The Listad station is a capital one. The house is large, with spacious rooms, but supper was a somewhat poor affair, owing possibly to the Pige and I not being able to understand one another. The fact was I thought her rather stupid, and her manner indicated pretty plainly what she thought of the English traveller. She got almost ill-tempered over it, and bounced out of the room as if she did not intend to come back in a hurry. But this was

the only instance of temper I met with. The Norwegians are rather phlegmatic than hasty, and I constantly met with the most kindly, patient endeavours to understand and please.

In the morning, however, before I was up, she came good-humouredly into my room with coffee and rusks. Blessings on her! for I was awfully empty, and longing for "bread of desire." This is a funny custom this, of the maid marching into your room without even knocking at your door, and depositing the tiny coffee-pot, with cream and rusks, on the little table by your bedside. And the doors have no locks or bolts, so that you cannot secure yourself against intrusion. But they "take it easy," and you learn to accept the custom, although it will, of course, sometimes happen that the early visit is not quite happily timed.

The morning was fresh; the clouds were lifting off the summit of the hills (scarcely mountains, although I suppose it would be difficult to decide what constitutes the difference between the two), and piling themselves up behind, reflecting the sun, and forming a glorious background of light. After a couple of hours of driving I came suddenly on something evidently intended for a monument of some kind. It was a square wooden post, with a sort of framed wooden pediment on the top, something like a pigeon-cote. There was an inscription on the pediment, and as the word "Sinkler," and the date "1612," struck my eye, I alighted to examine it. The inscription was as follows:—

" EPITAPHIUM.

Her under hviler Her-Oberste
Georg Jörgen Sinkler som falt
i kringlene Aaret 1612 med et
antal af 900 skaatter son olef blust
som Larpotter af et minde Tal af
300 Bonder af Læsjö, Waagre. Froon
og den Bonderne Andfører det var Badon
Sejelstad, af Ringoboc Sogn."

Had I been alone, who knows but I might have been tempted into a bit of sentimentalism? but three or four grinning boys, who were amused at the interest I manifested, and who were inclined to examine too curiously my knapsack which I had opened for my sketch-book, were a useful antidote. But I could not refrain from offering a sigh to the manes of Colonel Sinclair and his gallant comrades, although the genius of patriotism bade me admire rather the boldness and courage of the peasant natives who hurled them to destruction. Colonel Sinclair had landed with nine hundred men on the north-west coast of Norway, to bear a part with Gustavus Adolphus, of Sweden, against Christian IV. of Denmark. They knew they should have to

fight their way across the country into Sweden—a most daring adventure, even if only the ruggedness and awfulness of the district they had to march through were regarded. But the peasants were hastily gathered together, and, taking possession of heights above the defiles which the Scotch troops must march through, they overwhelmed them with rocks and missiles, and the whole nine hundred were killed or drowned. Colonel Sinclair's wife was with him, and there is a touching story told in connection with her, and duly chronicled in the guide books. A youth, who was engaged to be married on the following day, joined his countrymen to resist the invaders. His betrothed, hearing that there was an English lady among the British soldiers, bade him, for her sake, save the lady's life. He accordingly pressed on to the rescue, and, reaching her side, attempted to secure her: but she, mistaking his purpose, shot him dead on the spot! All perished, and this wooden pillar marked their resting-place. Subsequently I passed along the very route those brave fellows had taken from the coast, and as tradition has preserved all the details of their march and their nights' halting places, the whole affair came very vividly before the mind. The Norwegians to this day are proud of the exploit of their countrymen, who, only 300 strong, they say, defeated so formidable a body. And I could have imagined they had not many spots so famous, for I was constantly asked, to the very end of my stay in the country, whether I had seen the place where Sinkler (as they call him) fell.

I am ashamed to say this way-side memorial was the only thing I sketched in all Norway. One of our best artists had kindly insisted on contributing to my outfit carefully-selected colours, &c., and the grand result of it all was—a wooden post!

The country got wilder as we proceeded farther north. The huts were more primitive, rough-hewn log-huts, unpainted; animals poorer—pigs would do for ugly long-haired greyhounds. By the bye, I afterwards fancied that up in the north the various sounds of the animals were affected by the climate. The low of the cow and the crow of the cock seemed to me both to have less compass, and to be considerably flatter as well as thinner. But I could not be sure. For dinner there was brought me nothing but rye-bread, flad-bröd, butter, and some thin parings of cheese, which the sentry nose challenged and refused; so took the flad-bröd (pronounced flabro') and butter. This flad-bröd is something like oatmeal cake, but still thinner and chippier—a very poor thing for a hungry man! At Moen station, in the room where the Dagbog was kept, I noticed something hanging on the wall, which considerably excited my curiosity. There was a grotesque head carved, which faced one with a grin. It pro-

jected some three or four inches from a sort of long smooth board, perhaps two feet and a half long and six inches wide, like a tailor's sleeve-board. The whole thing was painted sky-blue and red, with a touch of gilding about it. What was it? The woman smiled at my curiosity; the man was rather more inclined to sneer at my vast ignorance. Now I was aware that occasionally old relics of the early heathendom were found in the country, and that many specimens were preserved in the Museum at Christiania; and this ugly head, the size of a moderate turnip, looked amazingly like heads of idols I had seen elsewhere. The more I looked, the more I became convinced that I had actually before me one of the uncouth divinities or goblins that abounded in ancient Scandinavia; and I thought I should like to bear off this memento of the distant past. It would be something to bring back a grim old Scandinavian idol. I took it down. I examined it carefully. My early impression was strengthened. The reader, no doubt, knows full well how, in general, your convictions do find everything to corroborate them. It is one of the advantages of starting from a theory, you know, and accounts for a good deal we meet with. Nothing like beginning with a theory, especially if you prefer coming pretty quickly to a conclusion, and find it irksome to wait for more light and to keep your judgment in abeyance. Well, I was very curious about this old idol, and being laudably anxious to get at the rights of it, I teased the poor woman with scarcely intelligible questions. Was not this something like the pursuit of antiquarian lore under difficulties? At last a bright thought seized that woman's brain. She went to a chest of drawers, took out a folded table-cloth, placed it, as it was, on the table, took the grim idol, with the sort of tailor's sleeve-board behind, out of my hand, and began to smooth the folded cloth with it; by which little bit of a *tableau vivant* in which she represented a laundress, I was to learn that my Scandinavian relic was, I must not say a laundress's iron, of course, but a substitute for it! Her husband had carved it for her to smooth the linen with after a wash. Did I bring that "idol" to England, think you? It was a lesson against hasty conclusions, and I confess I felt myself own brother to the Chinaman who came to England, for the improvement of his mind perhaps, and took notes of everything he saw, and having, too, quite a talent for generalization. He landed from the vessel in a boat rowed by a waterman with a wooden leg. The man, helping him ashore, stood with his wooden leg in the water, while the other was on dry ground. The evidence of design and the economy of the arrangement struck the philosophical mind of the Chinaman, and he wrote home, "that in England one-legged men are kept for watermen, to the saving of

all injury to health, shoe, and stocking, from standing in the river." Afterwards I found these carved substitutes for the irons of our laundries common enough, but I never cared for them after this discovery.

In this day's drive I was struck with the stunted appearance of some old firs, that looked like Scotch, and alighting found that many of them did not reach to my armpits. But though afterwards I often came on similar old wizened things, everybody knows how much of our finest pine and fir comes from Norway. Yet ever and anon you come upon various such tokens of the general ruggedness of the clime. There was something painful in the aspect of these poor trees, that would have done so much better had nature been more genial. It was in them to be better specimens of fir life, but their surroundings were too much for them. They almost seemed to appeal to me for sympathy. Caught sight of a mountain, not distant, with a good deal of snow on it, and the little guide said it was Dovre, but "*cura atra sedet*," &c.; just as I had begun to gaze on it with wistfulness, and to let old schoolboy memories and present fancies invest it with all sorts of interest, snap went the harness and down went the shafts, and so I had to be "practical."

Before reaching the night's resting-place we passed through some very grand scenery. One spot might well have been the home of the Titans. The river foamed and raged like a mad river possessed by ten thousand demons, through a winding gorge of piled-up rocks—huge black boulder-like rocks, which the Titans might have used to scale heaven with, or to hurl at their foes, and then in gloomy despair gathered them together and pent up the river with them till it was mad. Emerging from this defile we came on more open and rising ground, and the evening air from the mountains before us in the north was keen, and with a touch of frostiness in it. The next station was uninviting, and we pushed on, knowing we ought to be able to calculate on tolerable comfort at Tofte, which we reached about 9 o'clock. It was a large and imposing house, as things go, with ample tokens of prosperity. The owner is everywhere well known as the recognized lineal descendant of Harald Haarfager (the Fair-haired), who, following up the conquests of his father, Harald the Black, completed the subjugation of the whole country towards the end of the ninth century. Herr Tofte is very rich, and said to be immensely proud of his descent. But his appearance is nothing very royal, for a more thorough specimen of the utter peasant you would not meet with in a day's drive. Indeed, I set him down as a lout. But in this I did him an injustice. When the present King was on his way to Throndhjem to be crowned, he, too, had to stop at Tofte's house, who sent

word that his Majesty need not trouble to bring his plate with him, as he had plenty of silver for all his suite. The house bore ample tokens of the well-to-do character of the owner, whom on a subsequent visit I found not quite the lout I had fancied, but capable of courtesy and good humour. That evening, however, the only welcome I got was from the dogs, who took to me very graciously, and with whom I was glad to exchange friendly manifestations. Next day we should cross the Dovre, the Fjeld being generally considered as commencing about this part. I was ushered up a loft-ladder to my room, of timber, shaped only by the adze, with moss stuffed into the crevices. The window opened on a field, at the bottom of which the river ran, and from the opposite side a steep hill or mountain reared its shoulder, and there was newly fallen snow on the summit. On the wall of the chamber there was a grim representation in one picture of Marat and Charlotte Corday. At a previous station there was a coarse lithograph of our Queen, a very questionable likeness; but when the woman of the house drew my attention to it, I took off my cap right loyally, and said "God bless her!" which is more than her Majesty will ever do for me, I expect.

(To be continued.)

WESTHAMPTON CHURCH RECORDS.

IN SEARCH OF A PASTOR.

PART V.

MR. PERCY was walking quietly along the streets two or three days after Mr. Coulter's visit, when he was overtaken by his friend Mr. Robson, who might be regarded as the representative of a class in the Church not very numerous or very active, but who were not the less entitled to respect for their intelligence, position, and worth. He had himself been long connected with the place, was a liberal supporter of its funds, and, though prone on occasions to talk rather cynically, deeply interested in its prosperity. A Dissenter from conviction, he was not insensible to the defects too often revealed in the working of a system, which, nevertheless, he considered on the whole to be more scriptural than any other. On this point, indeed, he was intensely sensitive. His professional pursuits as a solicitor brought him into close intercourse with men of all classes and opinions, and he was often not a little annoyed, when at the

dinner-tables of some of his more aristocratic patrons, by the sneers (sometimes felt to be not wholly undeserved) against some Dissenting practices. It was not wonderful that the present state of the Westhampton Church should chafe and annoy such a man. Again and again had some of his church friends taunted him about the delay in the election of a minister, inquired as to the name of the patron, wondered whether he was waiting for his son to come of age, and jestingly proposed that a remonstrance should be addressed to the Bishop of the diocese, urging that so valuable a piece of preferment should not be suffered longer to lie vacant. It was only on the preceding day that he had been assailed in this fashion, and as the annoyance was still fresh, it lent something of irritation to the tone in which he now addressed Mr. Percy.

"Well, Percy," he exclaimed as he joined his friend, "what are our prospects? Has that little conclave of yours, which is presumed to carry all the brains of the church, and into whose secrets one of the 'profanum vulgus' must not venture to intrude, exhausted all its resources, and are we never to have a minister? I can tell you I am heartily sick of it. I cannot describe you the pain it gives me Sunday after Sunday, to hear my young people criticising the preacher of the day, and speculating as to his fitness for that much-coveted prize, the Westhampton pulpit. His sermon, his prayers, his voice, his looks, his very pocket-handkerchief and his mode of handling it, all come in for comment, until sometimes I am irritated beyond all possibility of endurance, and Sunday, which used to be anticipated with joy, is looked forward to with an uneasy fear, lest there should be something to provoke a class of observations which are fatal to all right feelings of reverence."

"You are too excitable and fastidious, my friend. I can partly sympathize with you, for I have had to bear similar annoyance, or even worse than annoyance, myself. I know the effect on our young people, especially on any who have a keen sense of the ridiculous, cannot be good, but still I hope its results will not be quite as mischievous as your fears seem to portend. But I have a strong confidence that a right-minded man, one of clear, intelligent views, generous sympathies, and high principles, such as we hope to get, will soon repair any evil that may have been wrought."

"Perhaps so, but look at the injury that is being done in the meantime. Habits once formed are not easily abandoned, and the kind of criticism which is fostered by our present state, will not be laid aside even when we get a minister. Then think of the remarks by members of other communities, to which we lay ourselves open. I was literally pelted most unmercifully only

last night at Sir Robert Lestrangle's, and I really had nothing I could say in reply, for I felt that anything was preferable to our present state of confusion and anarchy."

"Indeed; then perhaps you think it would be better that Sir Robert should perform for us the service he so kindly undertakes for the 3,000 people of Allingham, and appoint a spiritual overseer who should take the cure of our souls. Or perhaps you think that Wincanton, with its 30,000 inhabitants, is in an enviable condition. Its rector, who to my certain knowledge has not been inside the parish for the last fifteen years, but has left the people to the care of two curates, whom he has paid about £200 a year between them, while drawing nearly ten times the sum himself, is just dead. No doubt an appointment will be made directly. Indeed, it is generally understood that young Viscount ———, to whom the 'living' belongs, designated the old man's successor years ago, and so he will doubtless be installed without delay. This is a 'short and easy' mode, but I question whether you would prefer it."

"Certainly not, but is there really no alternative? Is it not possible to preserve the independence and rights of the Church without having to endure such practical inconvenience as that to which we have been subject?"

"I fear it is not possible to escape it altogether. Liberty is like everything else worth having in this world. Its advantages cannot be secured without some cost. The only question is whether it is worth the price we have to pay for it; and, for my own part, I cannot hesitate as to the answer. Better, infinitely better, all the little troubles, difficulties, and vexations that arise out of our delay, than the adoption of a system which not only infringes on the rights of those whom Christ has made free, but in doing so, checks the development of some of the noblest and most manly qualities of Christian character."

"Well, as to that, I cannot agree with you. What noble qualities are likely to be called forth by such talk as that in which Miss Farmer is always indulging, or the petty gossip which takes place at a number of those tea-fights, in which some of our old maids find so much enjoyment? Why, I heard the other day that Miss Farmer takes upon herself to obtain information as to the antecedents and present position of any one who is invited, as the cant phrase is, to come on 'probation,' and talks as though some 'peculiar responsibility' rested upon her in connection with the choice of a pastor. A marvellous privilege, in truth, to have the question as to who shall be our pastor settled by such lovers of tittle-tattle and religious scandal. For myself, I do not know whether I should not, on the whole, prefer that Sir Robert Lestrangle should decide such a question for me. I know, at all

events, that he would choose a gentleman, a certainty which I could not feel about Miss Farmer and her coadjutors, male and female."

"Mere caricature and exaggeration," said Mr. Percy, laughingly; although, if the truth must be told, he found it somewhat difficult to preserve his self-control. "You know, as well as I know, that Miss Farmer and her friends have very little real influence in the church. They talk largely and loudly enough, and perhaps sometimes they work a little mischief, but they have no real power to determine the action of the church. There is, after all, a current of right feeling in a church like ours, which is pretty sure, in the long run, to sweep away all the little prejudices and feelings the gossip to which you allude excites. A church including elements so different, yet having a strong and permanent principle of unity in the attachment of all to their common faith and their one Master, may be misled by false or imperfect information, and may thus be led to honour and choose one undeserving of the confidence which it bestowed upon him; or may, owing to some strong prepossessions, fail to recognize the worth of another, infinitely his superior in intellectual and spiritual character; but be assured it will not yield itself up to the mere whims and caprices of the gossips of whom you speak. If, indeed, people of this class have any semblance of power at all, it is because you, and others of a similar order, are hardly ever seen at our church meetings, and do not employ the legitimate influence which you possess."

"All very fine, but it is quite out of my way. To tell the honest truth, I should have very little patience with the unbusiness-like ways of management, the miserable twaddle and unctuous cant, which often passes current for superior wisdom, Mr. Ramsden's narrowness and Mr. Rowntree's pomposity, and really think I am far better away."

"Leaving others to bear the full weight of a burden which belongs equally to you, and to labour unaided by you, in the counteraction of evils, which it is your duty as much as it is theirs to strive to check."

"There, I must confess, you have me. I quite admit that it is not right for me to stand by doing nothing, and then complain of what is done by others, and sometimes I think that I will take a more active part; but habit is too strong for me, and I am got too old to change now. Still, not the less am I interested about the settlement of an efficient pastor at Castle Hill, and indeed, if you do not secure one soon, I shall have to go elsewhere."

"Nay," said Mr. Percy, "that you will never do. I know you too well to believe that you will abandon old friends because

they are in a little difficulty, and I yet cherish the assurance that even if your more public help was shown to be necessary, it would not be withheld."

Had Mr. Percy been a man of less calm and philosophic temper, less decided in his own convictions, and less resolute in his purpose, such conversations, and they were not unfrequent, would have greatly disturbed him. But he had a strong confidence in those with whom he was associated, in their freedom from the influence of any factious motive, and in their earnest desire to do the right, and, therefore, did not at all despair, even in the presence of many crotchets and a good deal of littleness and narrowness, of arriving at a satisfactory result. He was sufficiently conscious that the supply of men of real power was hardly equal to the rapidly increasing demands of the churches; but he had faith in the promise of the great Head of the Church, and could not doubt that in His own time He would send His people a wise and faithful teacher. Meanwhile the present aspect of affairs was not encouraging. He had never entertained much hope as to any of the three whom his fellow-deacons had resolved to invite, and the visits of Mr. Fenton and Mr. Coulter had confirmed every anticipation he had formed from his personal inquiries respecting them. Of Mr. Douglas, the gentleman recommended by Mr. Cameron, he had still less expectation. If he had a prejudice, it was against men who, after reaching mature years, had, without any definite reason, changed their religious opinions and associations, and the slighter the change the less was he inclined to regard it with favour; nor did he think that a Presbyterian training or a Scotch style of preaching and administration were very desirable elements in a pastor of Westhampton. Had his knowledge of Mr. Douglas been more intimate, his views would have been still stronger.

Mr. Cameron, indeed, had taken too much on trust relative to his friend. His personal acquaintance with him was very slight, but—he was a Scotchman. His father was an elder of the Kirk in the village adjoining that in which his own childhood and youth had been spent. He had known him as a promising lad, had heard that his career at the University had been rather distinguished, and had a letter from a friend mentioning his change of opinions, and asking his good services on his behalf. This was all. Of the exact reasons for his conversion to Independency, of his intellectual tendencies, of the tone of his spirit and character, he knew literally nothing, and was, it must be said, not a little astonished and grieved when Douglas visited him on his way to fulfil his engagement with the Westhampton people, to find the kind of man to whom he had so freely committed himself. Douglas's conversational powers were great, but while

the first half-hour's talk revealed a man of undoubted genius, it showed also how wild that genius had run, how little the mind had been subjected to any process of healthful discipline, and how crude and immature were the opinions on points of the highest moment. It was soon evident, however, that whatever his faults might be, they were not, with the exception of a firmness that bordered on obstinacy, those generally supposed to be characteristic of his nation. Instead of being cold and phlegmatic, he was rash, impetuous, and excitable; and many of his extreme statements, put forth in the boldest and most offensive form, greatly shocked the quiet, thoughtful Mr. Cameron, who was himself one of those hard theologians who never question the conclusions of their own stern logic, and are greatly surprised when they find the moral nature of men of finer perception and keener sympathies rising in rebellion against propositions which have been established to their minds by a process of reasoning in which Aristotle himself could find no flaw. Douglas was of a different stamp; his philosophy and theology were the creatures of his own feelings: he was very fond of argumentation; like a great many other men, he fancied himself strong on the very point where he was weakest, and was very proud of his supposed dialectic skill; but, in truth, of logic he was utterly innocent, and cut but a sorry figure when he had to deal with any master of intellectual fence. But no experiences of this kind served to diminish his self-confidence, or to awaken any suspicion as to the soundness of any of his views, which were set forth with a dogmatism that was in inverse ratio to the care which had been employed in their formation. That he had not found a place in the somewhat narrow and exclusive ranks of the Free Church was not very wonderful, and it remained to be seen whether even Congregationalism would afford sufficient freedom for his wild and erratic speculations. He was extremely anxious to be taken as a representative of "Broad Dissent," but he lacked many qualifications necessary for one who would efficiently sustain such a character. He was utterly deficient in sober thought, and instead of being able to look at a subject from different points of view, and allow its proper weight to each, was more one-sided and intolerant of all opposition than the harshest dogmatist. His breadth consisted simply in a repudiation of established notions, which he often showed his inability to comprehend, and a love of startling novelty, which was all the more welcome if it was likely to irritate and wound the prejudices of those whom he contemptuously called "old fogies." Yet, let it be said in justice to him, he was desirous to do right. He had not only a kindly and generous heart, which was continually prompting him to do noble things, but there was also a vein of devout pious

feeling which frequently cropped up, and whose developments only awakened the regret that it was so often crossed by such serious "faults" that its value was greatly diminished. He had not taken up the ministry as a profession; he had a notion that he had a great work to do in connection with it, and if his theology was defective, at least his heart was sound and his aspirations lofty.

Mr. Percy had invited him to be his guest during his stay at Westhampton, and it was fortunate that he had, for his own wide knowledge of the world and of men enabled him to make allowance for vagaries which had he been entertained by a less educated and discriminating host, have led to some painful collision. As it was there was not a little that pained him. Though not an ardent admirer of creeds and confessions, he had a strong sense of the importance of definite dogmatic opinion, and especially had too clear an appreciation of the intense earnestness with which some of the great men of the past worked in the elaboration of the time-honoured formularies of theology, to relish the contemptuous style in which Mr. Douglas spoke of them. His own mind was not restrained within the limits defined by the "Shorter Catechism," or the "Confession of Faith," but he regarded those documents with too much respect to admire the flippancy of many of his sneering criticisms, and was thankful only that they had not been uttered in the hearing of some of the younger people, who needed no such talk to confirm their tendency to regard all religious dogmas with contemptuous indifference. Had Mr. Douglas claimed more latitude of opinion than many churches are prepared to accord to their ministers, he would have agreed with him; had he even expressed his strong dissent from some particular doctrine or doctrines, he would not have been severe in his judgments; but what grieved him most was the evident want of all fixedness of opinion, the disposition to sneer at dogmatic theology as an effete thing, the unguarded mode of speech adopted in relation to things he himself always held in deepest sanctity, the restless discontent with the old, while there was nothing better to substitute in its room. He looked forward somewhat tremblingly to the Sunday, confident that if Mr. Douglas's public teaching was of a piece with his conversation in the house, the mischief done might be very serious.

The Sunday came, and it was one whose circumstances the people at Westhampton did not easily forget. From some quarter or other a few of them had got the impression that the preacher of the day was a man of extraordinary gifts, and as the idea had been widely circulated the morning congregation was unusually large. Mr. Douglas refused to wear the gown and bands, as savouring too much of priestly assumption, and to him specially

offensive because of their association with Calvin and Geneva; indeed, we doubt whether the cope and surplice would not have been less of an abomination in his eyes. His figure was tall and stately, and though rather lank, not without a certain air of majesty which produced an impression; while with his Northern accent and innumerable Scotticisms, there was blended a strange musical tone, at times softening even to pathos, which made his manner in general pleasing and effective. His prayer was not undevotional, though there was a great want of coherence and too much of mere rhapsody. Of humble penitential confession and earnest supplication, there was little, but instead, outbursts of feeling sometimes very mystical and unintelligible to the hearers, yet not without many touches of true beauty and devout sentiment. It was anything but common prayer, many would say that it was no prayer at all. There was hardly a solitary request made known to God at all, and it appeared as though the preacher's notion was, that prayer was only the outpouring of certain thoughts and imaginings of his own heart relative to God, His attributes and His works, with scarcely the element of petition introduced. We are at a loss how to describe the sermon. The announcement of a text was evidently only an unmeaning ceremony, for having once read it, Mr. Douglas dismissed it once and for ever, and the keenest eye would have been puzzled to detect any connection between it and the sermon. The subject of the discourse was the "Sin of Bigotry," and into the discussion the preacher contrived to crowd an infinite variety of things relevant and irrelevant, including not a few allusions to his own personal history, the discussions in which he had been engaged, and persecution he considered he had endured. Many passages full of glowing eloquence on the supremacy of conscience, the advantages of unfettered liberty, the wickedness of attempting to place any barrier to free inquiry, and the blessings which the world had already reaped from the diffusion of intelligence and the removal of restrictions there were, but the effect of these was marred by the indications of a soured, cynical, angry spirit, that, even while professing such love for liberty, resented all difference of opinion as though it were a personal offence, and what now expressed itself in biting sarcasm and now in keen invective. Throughout, too, there was the tendency to identify adherence to the older forms of theology with bigotry, and quietly to assume that they could be retained only by those who were under some kind of coercion. Many were captivated by the speaker's unquestionable power, his aptness of illustration, his force of language; others were lost in wonder, puzzled to understand in what direction he really desired to lead the people; while most intelligent and devout men of the church at once

recognized the full peril of teachings which sought to pull down everything and build up nothing.

The evening's congregation was still larger than that of the morning. Those who disapproved most of the morning's sermon were just the class who did not feel it right to absent themselves from the services of their own sanctuary, beside which they were desirous to have every opportunity of forming an intelligent opinion about a man who they could see was sure to exercise some influence on the congregation. Of course Mr. Douglas's admirers mustered in full strength, and brought many friends with them, and the chapel was full in every part. Encouraged by this apparent indication of the favour with which his morning's performance had been regarded, the preacher addressed himself still more heartily to his evening's work. But he was far less successful than before. He talked about the "subjective" and "objective" sides of religion, and managed to bring in a great deal of the philosophical jargon of the day, which to some conceited would-be intellectualists, sounded very profound, but which Mr. Percy and men of his stamp knew how to appraise at its true value, and which, to the great body of the people, was utterly unmeaning. For an hour he preached on, lost in a maze of German metaphysics; but none were profited, and the majority were very weary. A slight but significant incident may illustrate the impression produced on the mind of simple but devout people. In accordance with general practice a prayer-meeting was held after the evening service, and among those who were called on to pray was an elderly man, who, though in very humble life, was greatly esteemed by the whole church for his unaffected piety, his natural intelligence, and his remarkable knowledge of Holy Scripture. After thanking God for the "glorious Gospel" and the privileges of the Christian Sabbath, the old man marked his own sense of the sermons to which he had listened, and expressed his feeling of sorrow in the petition that there might never be another Sabbath on which he would have to say, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." The almost involuntary "Amen" with which many responded proved how widely his feelings were shared.

(To be concluded in our next.)

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Hymns on the Holy Communion. By ADA CAMBRIDGE. With a Preface by the Rev. R. H. Baynes, M.A. Houlston & Wright.

THE *Christian Spectator* devoutly wishes to recognize our common Christianity under all the forms in which it may appear, however far some of them may be from its own ideal of the perfection of beauty—the simplicity that is in Christ, and although not seldom they may be fanciful, or even lackadaisical, uncouth, or even grotesque. To the “Friend” in his bare meeting-house we say “My brother!” and to the High-Churchlady, kneeling tremulously on the lowest step of “the altar” before “the white-robed priest”—though we fear we should unduly shock her fine ecclesiastical and æsthetic sensibilities—“My sister!”

In such a broad catholic spirit must we notice these hymns, if we would do justice to the evidently accomplished and devout, though ecclesiastically-sentimental writer, at once conciliated by the piety of the dedication, and amused by the frontispiece—a chancel with painted windows, and the robed and hooded “priest” very appropriately turning his back on the spectator and presumed communicants. The hymns, as hymns, are highly creditable both to the cultivated talents of the lady and to her religious earnestness, even though the former may not be inspired by genius, and we deem the latter possibly mistaken in some of its seekings. Allowing for what in the sentiment we dissent from, we have a pleasure in saying that we have very fair and praiseworthy poems without much of what we call poetry. Indeed, we almost fear that the muse whom Milton invoked from

“the secret top

Of Oreb or of Sinai,”

or from

“Sion hill, and Siloa’s brook that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God,”

has so decided a preference for such spots as to be ill at ease in the closer atmosphere which “priests” and their admirers prefer. But Miss Cambridge exhibits so intense a desire after perfect fellowship with her Lord, even in His sufferings, and is so earnestly striving towards her own ideal of saintliness, and often presents her thoughts and aspirations in verse so pleasant and happy, that we feel no inclination to allow what we do not sympathise with to interfere with our just appreciation both of her Christian graces and her talents as an accomplished hymnist. We take these hymns with thanks, and offer her in return our heartiest good wishes.

The volume is ushered into notice by the Rev. R. H. Baynes, M.A., well known as the accomplished editor of the “*Lyra Anglicana*,” &c., and himself the author of some very pleasing poems, a man of kind

heart, and genial spirit, and broad sympathies, but who must allow us to regret that his Preface proceeds on the assumption (which in this case we will not characterise) that his particular church, commonly, but inaccurately, even though legally, styled "the Church of England," is THE Church; a fundamental mistake for a Christian—if not for a clergyman—to fall into, and one which introduces a falsetto tone into a Preface otherwise religious and devout.

Notes of the Christian Life. By HENRY ROBERT REYNOLDS, B.A., President of Cheshunt College, &c. London: Macmillan & Co.

A volume of sermons which the author did well to give to the Church at large, by many sections of which we are sure it will be highly esteemed. Wise, thoughtful, calm, judicious, it is at the same time broad, comprehensive, catholic; liberal without "liberalism," it is firmly loyal to truth, while recognizing that there are diversities of manifestations and operations. Firm to his own convictions, which are not traditional or conventional merely, but the result of free and honest inquiry, Mr. Reynolds knows how to recognize "the voice of Jacob," even when "the hands are the hands of Esau." He appears from these "*Notes of the Christian Life*" to be a man who knows how to hold his own with a due regard to the consciences of others; and his motto might be the two-fold one, "Buy the truth and sell it not," and "Grace be with all them that love our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Cheshunt College is to be congratulated on its president, and the friends of the *British Quarterly* may be grateful that the mantle of the wise and honoured Vaughan has fallen on worthy shoulders.

Principles of Education, Drawn from Nature and Revelation, and applied to Female Education in the Upper Classes. By the Author of "*Amy Herbert*," &c. London: Longman & Co. 1865.

We believe we shall render a good service to all parents and governesses, and others who have in any measure the responsibility of training children devolved on them, by drawing their attention to this new work of Miss Sewell's. We had hoped to let the book speak for itself by some copious extracts, and indeed still hope to quote largely from its pages, but we cannot find room at present, and therefore, rather than longer delay the notice of it, content ourselves with a slight reference. Perhaps no one could so write on education as to command the full and unqualified assent of all readers. At all events, we are sure that neither Plato in the old Greek world, nor Milton in the more recent English world, could; while some persons would even doubt whether Solomon himself, with all his wisdom, did not, in this matter of education, sometimes, like Homer, nod. It is then but a matter of course that, as we read Miss Sewell's book, we now and then pencil in the margin a note of interrogation, and now and then a mark of mild dissent. But we feel deeply indebted to her for her "*work*," and are quite sure that the thoughtful study of her pages would prove a blessing to many parents—to most, aye, to all, and through them to their children. If our judgment is worth anything let our friends act on it by at once making themselves intimate with the result of Miss Sewell's large experience, and careful observation, and wise thought.

THE
CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR.

MARCH, 1866.

THE ROUND TABLE.

CHAPTER III.

THE LETTER—HOW TO ANSWER IT?—THE MONOLOGUE—WYCLIFFE
COLLEGE—THE NONCONFORMIST MINISTRY.

MARY FLETCHER retired to her chamber with the letter. She could not but half divine the nature of it, both from the peculiar manner of her mother, and those quick intuitions of the female heart which are often so sure. But it was altogether a rare and very strange revelation which seemed to be flashing into her soul, and with trembling steps she gained her room, and sank into a chair. She gazed on the letter; for several moments her eyes were fixed on the address, and she hardly dared to break the seal. Indeed, she had scarcely strength to make the effort; she held it nervously in her trembling hand, and her whole frame was relaxed. She was on the threshold of some new world, and a great awe fell upon her, yet not of a cold or repellent kind; it was not such that she would have wished it absent, or even wished it less. A warm hand seemed beckoning her forward. At length she opened the letter. It was the first time she had been addressed in the language of love;—the first time a man had come into so strange a relation to her. She read, and her hand shook as she read, but not with cold. And then moving across the room she sank on a low couch, and, half reclined, let the moments pass by unheeded, wrapped in a sweet delicious state of

half reverie, half unconsciousness. Amor—not the counterfeit that so many mistake for the genuine child of the skies, but a modest angel youth, who would have frowned scornfully on the bow and quiver of the idle plaything of mythology; Amor—such as Dante knew to draw and Rossetti knows to paint—drew her on with warm but reverent hand into that new world which only he can open before the wondering soul.

“The soul of music slumbers in the shell,
Till waked and kindled by the master’s spell;
And feeling hearts—touch them but rightly—pour
A thousand melodies unheard before.”

An hour had passed. Had she slept and dreamed? She had not slept; but she had dreamed. And now she rose. She opened her desk, and put writing materials before her. She dipped her pen in the ink, and wrote the date, which was easy. Then a dead stop. How to begin? She wrote “Sir;” looked at it, and was in a strait. Presently she took another sheet, and wrote “Dear Sir.” But the word seemed so like a stepping back from the world of delicious reverie in which she had been living ages in moments, that again she hesitated. But I must not take up my reader’s, no doubt, precious time, by detailing the maiden difficulties which Mary Fletcher was conscious of, in acknowledging the frank and manly offer of his heart and hand, which that letter from Mr. Langston, as we know, contained. And when, bye-and-by, after a gentle tap at the door, her mother entered the chamber, it was almost a relief to her full-fraught and bewildered heart.

I know I am exposing myself, or perhaps her rather, to the light shafts of ridicule from many a young lady of the present day, whose reading from her childhood has abundantly prepared her to deal with all contingencies that may arise in her intercourse with the world; and who has probably confided to one sworn friend of an hour, and another, half-a-dozen pretty little *affaires de cœur* before her seventeenth summer has passed away. But, happily for herself, and for all whose lives were bound up with hers, Mary Fletcher lived before these days, when the too appropriate term of “fast young ladies” almost throws a stigma on the whole sex. No foolish parents had left all sorts of silly books in her way, and then left her to choose all her own reading. Neither had silly, empty-headed, shallow-hearted girls been her companions. Nor had the bloom been rubbed off the peach by vulgar handling. But, as the lily in the garden, so had she grown in modest, unobtrusive retirement in that happy home. And now that surprise, and wonder, and gladness, and love, and feminine delicacy, and maiden modesty, and frankness, and the

new wish to pour out all her soul in one vast flood, had taken possession of her, I for one deem it no marvel that she found herself utterly at a loss in this same matter of letter-writing.

Mrs. Fletcher understood the state of the case at a glance. And Mary, seeing her mother's eyes fixed on a full half-dozen sheets of paper begun to be written on, and then flung aside, with which the table was strewed, rose, and, throwing her arms round her mother's neck, covered her with tears and kisses. Presently, the two sat side by side and hand in hand, on the low couch, and there easily sprang up between them that frank and tender confidential intercourse which only such a relationship can beget, and that only when the mother is one who is worthy of the name. "Mammas" may be an exigency of the nineteenth century, but thrice happy those English girls who lived in the age of English "Mothers." Aye, Madame Campan gave a wise and deep-seeing answer to the first Napoleon, when, in reply to his question as to the greatest want of the day, she said—"Mothers!" And I have often been struck with the remark of Jean Paul, "Unhappy is that man whose mother has not made all women venerable for her sake."

I pass over those moments sacred to reserve. The mother's final word was, "Well, my love, since you feel it so impossible to write a letter satisfactory to yourself, let it rest. Your father will have less difficulty in writing, of course; and since you are so assured that you can, in time, give your whole heart to him, we will just express our own satisfaction, and invite him to seek the answer from yourself this evening." And the hours of the day glided on. But it was a new day to all. There had never been the like before. Their child seemed at the same time both nearer to them, and yet farther off. She seemed as if being borne away out of their reach, and yet nestling more tenderly in their hearts. There was often a tremulousness in the voice as they spoke to each other. And tone and touch and look were all tenderer than ever. And there was a softer fulness in Mary's eye, and a moisture and a light, that had never been there till now. Aye, truly the soul chooses the voice and the eye as its favourite organs.

That evening, in glad acceptance of the invitation that had been sent accordingly, Mr. Langston came. A few words of kindly greeting from the father, and presently from the mother, who were both prepared to welcome him as a future son, and then Mr. Fletcher told him he would find Mary in the study.

How the knock of the street-door had smote upon her heart! How the sound of his voice at a distance made her shake like an aspen-tree—how her heart seemed to rise up into her very throat as

she heard his step advancing alone to the room where she sat, vainly wishing to be employed in the bit of work she had instinctively brought with her into the study,—and how they met,—and what he said,—and how, in that summer evening gloaming, she found her courage grow,—and how she rose up as the dusk increased, proposing to go to her parents in the garden—and how he imprinted the first kiss she had ever received (and this, at the risk of being counted “slow,” I must, nevertheless, chronicle as having been imprinted on her forehead), and how

“She took the kiss sedately,”—

my readers will not expect me to narrate. He drew her hand within his arm, and sought the garden with her.

That night what was there to hinder her from freely blending his name in her evening prayer? And how blessed a thing to be able to take all one's affections to Our Father who is in heaven; assured that the wise and tender Author of our whole nature does not desire that youth and maiden should confine themselves in their intercourse with Him to what might be termed strictly religious topics. Aye, few of us yet know all that is involved in the apostolic teaching that “GOD IS LOVE.” We are afraid to let nature in field and grove offer an atom of aid, as an interpreter even of the outermost circle. And we are equally afraid to let the sweet relationships of home reveal anything of the meaning of the parental in God. And we are still more afraid to let our own hearts, in their softest, happiest, and most genial hours, interpret the great heart of God. It is forgotten, except for mere theological purposes, that “God made man in His own image;” and that at first all humanity was summed up in an individual, and that the making of two out of one, to the end of a happier unity, came afterwards; and that Christ, the perfect image of the Invisible God, as well as the perfect ideal of humanity, contained in Himself all the mental and moral attributes of the two sexes; and that God is called Father, not as exclusive of the still tenderer maternal relationship, but as including it. For the God of the Bible, who brought Eve in her maiden glory to the first man, and whom Abraham's servant prayed to to direct him in the choice of a wife for Isaac, and one of whose historians records in touching language the love of Jacob for the daughter of Bethuel—that sweet Syrian idyll—and another, in a poem which the Hebrews called “The Song of Songs,” set forth in glowing verse our common human love in all its fondest endearment, as, at all events, the basis that he needed for his, perhaps, higher purpose;—I say, for the God of universal nature, and of the thereto-agreeing Bible, we have substituted a theological God, to whom we may

confess our human sins, but not our human loves. We thank Him for the food on the breakfast or dinner table—the bread and the butter, the beef and the beer. But there are higher joys which innocence itself may revel in, that I question if one in ten thousand would ever dream of thanking God for. And we lose, not gain, by restricting ourselves in intercourse with God, to the matters of conscience and faith alone. Truly David, whom He so greatly inspired, uttered a wise and happy word when he said, “Ye people, pour out your heart before Him!”

And so it was a settled thing. “Mr. Langston was engaged to Mary Fletcher.” And the people, of course, had their say about it. And, of course, it would be very curious to relate how various and opposite that “say” was. Some folks “had guessed how it would all end, when Mr. Fletcher invited a young man like that to his house so much;” “no doubt he thought that it would be just the thing for his daughter;” “and that Mary Fletcher, so quiet, so shy, so diffident, so retiring—ah! it was all plain enough to see what she had been aiming at all along.” And some even “had no patience with such goings on.” For I am sorry to say that in Kingstown there were people—chiefly (I am still more sorry to say) of the sex which we would fain call the better—who, instead of rejoicing with them that rejoice (as much a duty as sympathy with the distressed), would like, if they could, to mingle a little vinegar—yes, at all events, a little—with the oil of joy. But these, I am happy to say, were exceptions—sour exceptions, we may call them; and yet, when they spoke to Mary Fletcher, they, too, called her “dear.” For the most part, people at once gave their hearty sanction when the thing was known, and kindest greetings were offered by many who would have gladly made the very flowers more lovely if they could, and the songs of the birds sweeter, around the path of the young couple.

Some days later, Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher were one afternoon very naturally talking over the prospects of the future, and as his remarks will serve to advance our narrative a stage, we may take a few sentences. The speech may seem rather long, perhaps, and especially with no remark or query interposed by Mrs. Fletcher; but the fact is—(and I hope none of even my fair readers belong to that superfine-lady class, one of whom Dr. Parr apostrophise as “the greatest—tobacco-stopper he ever knew”)—the fact is, I say, Mr. Fletcher was addicted to the use of the weed. He loved to encircle his head with a mild and azure *nimbus*. The peculiarly beautiful spirals of graceful light-blue, upward tending, and ever becoming fainter and fainter,

were to him exquisitely enjoyable. And my readers will please to intercalate, at every few words, a pleasant, gentle sound, such as, under the circumstances, may be surmised, and such as is only heard under such circumstances. Cowper says, you know—

“The pipe, with solemn interposing puff,
Makes half a sentence at a time enough.”

“That evening—when Mr. Langston and I—after a most frank—and, I might say, pathetic conversation—came to the conclusion—that it would be a right thing—for him—to consecrate his whole self—to the work of the ministry,—it was settled,—as you know,—that I should at once arrange—for his spending a couple of years—at Wycliffe College.—He will bear his own expenses;—and as his classical education—has been extremely well attended to,—he will give his time—chiefly to those studies—which will more directly prepare him for ministerial work.—And Dr. Faber tells me—he will do all in his power—to fit him for his future work. Now—I do not expect—Mr. Langston will ever dazzle the world—by any astonishing display;—nor yet that he will even be what is called—a popular preacher.—He has been too thoroughly trained in scholarship,—and too much accustomed—to the proprieties of better-class society,—and is of too refined a nature,—and perhaps I may add—of too devout a spirit,—to be able to adopt a style of preaching—likely to be very popular.—It will be the wiser and more thoughtful class—that will appreciate and value him,—as I am sure he will deserve.—He will not be—a pushing, forward man,—ever keeping himself before the public,—and fussing about with societies for this—and movements for that.—But he will be a thoughtful,—studious,—and honest expounder—of the truths he finds in the Book,—fearless and free.—His earnestness will be very quiet, however,—because it will be, or I am mistaken,—so genuine and so deep. His manner will be that of the true gentleman—and scholar. And I fear—he will be a good deal surprised—at some of the manifestations that are before him.—If he can,—after his two years at Wycliffe College are up,—meet with a congregation—so happy as to have the right kind of men—among them—imparting the general tone—it will be—not only well for him,—but, I am sure, it will be well for them.—He will make—a minister—for sensible people to prize. His mind is already well furnished,—his character is well balanced,—he has talent,—there is, perhaps, even an undercurrent—of poetry in him;—and he will be a judicious preacher,—whose instructions will be pleasantly put,—and as pleasantly delivered. That he will be ‘a workman—that needeth not to be ashamed’—I have no doubt,—and an acquisition—to any congregation in the kingdom. Still, he will not be popular.—

And, as a consequence—some second-class sphere of labour—will be his lot—speaking, that is, somewhat secularly, perhaps.—Of course,—he might,—as to income,—do far better than become a Nonconformist minister.—The same talent, and power, and energy,—which he will bring to bear on what he undertakes,—would command a far higher price—in the world, than in the Church,—or, at least, in our section of it.—But his mind is decided;—and in a spirit—I deeply approve and admire—he gives himself up to serve God in the gospel of His Son—with all his heart.—And we must leave the future. The prospect for Mary—is not very brilliant,—but—we have never sought—great things,—either for ourselves or for her,—and her lot in life will be—pretty much what it has ever been.”

I think the above report must suffice. For, however Mrs. Fletcher, as a good wife and mother, might listen as she worked to this monologue of her husband's, the reader, not feeling her interest in either the speaker or the subject, will naturally prefer to let the gentleman enjoy his pipe and his chat without being disturbed.

And now, out of all the topics that offer themselves, which shall I choose? I know one young lady that wishes with all her heart I would say more about Mary Fletcher and Mr. Langston, and paint some of those happy scenes that are taken for granted as common at that stage to which this narrative has been brought, and then, without too much delay, come on to “the great event of all.” Ah, my dear young lady, I fear I cannot gratify you. For one thing, this well-worn stump of a pen of mine, as perhaps you have discovered, is ill adapted to the graceful task. And then, I have a notion that the “veil” is not altogether discarded by nature even yet; and that the present age would gain (or regain) more by reverencing this symbol, than by so recklessly throwing it aside, as is getting to be the fashion in these somewhat brazen days:—

“And why should gentle hearts and true
Bare to the rude world's withering view
Their treasure of delight!

“No—let the dainty rose awhile
Her bashful fragrance hide—
Rend not her silken veil too soon,
But leave her in her own soft noon,
To flourish and abide.”

However, as the young lady who wishes me to dwell on vernal and autumnal evening walks, when the yellow moon rises through the grove like an egg of light, and to overhear and report the fondly confiding talk of our betrothed friends, is quite a typical young

lady, I will add, for her especial behoof, that through all the months and even years that intervened before the arrival of "the auspicious day," Mary Fletcher bore herself with all that maidenly gracefulness and dignity which might be expected of her. She was not "a pretty fool." And she gave herself no airs. Nor did she ever trifle with her lover; nor foolishly, and let us add wickedly, seek to engage him more deeply, by waking even the faintest pangs of jealousy in his bosom. She was neither reserved, nor forward, but perfectly natural; which is wisest, when the nature is a frank and innocent and loving one, like hers. One other thing I will tell my sparkling flashing young lady friend—and I would have her treasure up the morsel of information as something worthy to be pondered, perhaps, in days that she, too, is doubtless anticipating—namely, that Mary Fletcher, albeit quite unconsciously, gained his ever-growing respect quite as much as his deepening love. I may even say the more he knew her, the more he revered, as well as admired and loved her. And if the class for whom I parenthetically write these few lines can feel the significance of the hint, and can believe in the superior blessedness of the love that dwells with wisdom (the superiority I was going to say of the Uranian to the Thalassian Venus), I will as a friend add that Wordsworth and his class are rather better guides into the divine realm of poesy for young ladies than Moore and Byron; neither of whom could have written Milton's Comus.

"Why should we fear youth's cup of joy,
If pure would sparkle less?
Why should the cup the sooner cloy
Which God hath deigned to bless?"

Mr. Langston went to Wycliffe College.

So much had intervened between those old Oriel days and the time of his becoming "a student" under Dr. Faber, that the contrast was by no means wholly disagreeable. The young men he now found himself associated with, indeed, were a totally different class from his former companions; not drawn from the same stratum of society; but still they were, on the whole, perhaps, more to his present mind. After some longer experience, he was of opinion that both Oriel College and Wycliffe College—if we may venture on the comparison—had their respective advantages. He would have been glad to find in his new associates more of the frankness, and geniality, and buoyancy, and manliness, and breadth of "the set" he once belonged to. There was not one that could hold a bat like a cricketer, or shoot, or that could have pulled an oar in a college boat on the Isis, or that could spar, or fence, or had ever ridden to cover. But then, on the other hand, there were none who were wasting their

precious youth in folly, and worse than folly ; none who were involving themselves in debt, that would cripple them for long after-years ; none whose walls were hung with those peculiar pictures which find favour with " the men " who do not " go in for " Madonnas and Crucifixes, and the representations of the severer saintship. Most strangers in Oxford are struck with the appearance of the printsellers' windows in Term time. Either pictures from Catholic sources, for the young men who favour High Church, or else, pictures very suggestive of anything but saintliness. Mr. Langston thought that if there had been among his new companions more manhood—more of the manly, their piety would have suffered no diminution. But he recognized that a very genuine fear of God, and a simple desire to devote life to the carrying on of the cause of Christ, did, on the whole, characterize the greater number of Dr. Faber's " students." There was a deeper interest in theological questions than he had found, at all events in his set, at Oxford ; a much greater acquaintance with the Scriptures, and more devoutness. He thought that if one must be shut up to either the one or the other, as it is, you would certainly get a better training for the life-long preparation and delivery of sermons at Wycliffe than at Oriel ; but that still, for the training of an English gentleman, and for all that ought to constitute the basis of a more specific training for the Christian ministry, Oriel had its great advantages ; and he felt thankful to his former Alma Mater for what he felt would be life-long benefit. But Dr. Faber was a man for whom he felt nothing but respect. His acquaintance with " heads of houses " and college dons did not cause the doctor to suffer in comparison ; for his learning was great, and it was thorough, while his piety was of the highest order ; and Mr. Langston felt that he should all his life long owe a vast debt of gratitude to Dr. Faber.

Had he gone direct from Oxford to Wycliffe College, without passing through those severe trials he had undergone, and especially without experiencing that total change in all his views and feelings on the subject of religion which we have seen, and without the preparation which his connection with the Nonconformist church at Kingstown had afforded, I can easily conceive that the contrast between the two would have been intolerable. But circumstances alter cases ; and he now found comparatively little difficulty in accommodating himself to the position to which he believed the finger of Providence had guided him. He seldom spoke of his old Oxford life. There almost seemed to him a gulf between that and the present. But the tone he unconsciously adopted was an element in " the house," which Dr. Faber and the other tutors soon felt was

valuable. He was respected by the young men for his attainments, and for his skill in manly sports and games, and his general *savoir faire*, and his gentlemanly bearing; all of which made his acknowledged piety also more of a power among them.

As to the "students" themselves, he came to be of opinion that mere personal piety and the desire to be useful had, in some instances, been allowed too much weight in procuring them admission to the "school of the prophets;" and that, while these qualities are, of course, indispensable, they by no means constitute a sufficient passport into the ranks of candidates for the ministry. In the Established Church, "the service" is the chief thing, the prescribed prayers, and lessons, and other formularies; and the sermon is something additional. But among Nonconformists, who have from the beginning retained more of the original instinct of the Reformation, preaching occupies, and can occupy, no secondary place. "The Teacher sent from God," as to His public labours with men, was a preacher and teacher only. He never led the prayers or praises of the people. He neither ushered in the sermon (on the Mount, for instance) with a prayer, nor followed it up with one. (We do not mean to press this fact for more than it is worth, fully recognizing the speciality of our Lord's case.) And preaching was the one great work which devolved on the first missionaries of the Cross. Of course, when they made converts, and those converts banded together for mutual help, worship together was at once felt to be a necessity and a precious element. But teaching and preaching could not be re-manded to a second and inferior place. So with the Reformation came a revival of the comparatively disused practice. For Rome, by a true instinct, seeks, under various pretences, to make "the service" and "the sacraments" everything; and preachers and sermons are few and far between. And were it not for Protestantism, they would be fewer still. Not worship, not the service, not the sacraments, not the priest—but the preacher and the truth, were the Alpha and the Omega of the Reformation. And now that the very idea of the Reformation is offensive to a rapidly increasing number of the clergy, we find in the Church of England the preacher again being studiously merged in "the priest," and every effort is made, often skilfully, and with marvellous success, to make "the service" everything; while the sermon, which cannot be altogether omitted, is merely a justification or enforcement of some part of the service, or of the sacraments. The Nonconformists have cherished, we say, the original instinct of the Reformation. With them, the preacher cannot become "a priest;" nor can the service, independently of the sermon, ever be made so pre-eminent, as that poverty in the pulpit can fail to tell most disastrously. It is true that this instinct, as we have termed

it, has sometimes (but those days, we hope, are passing) led, perhaps, to an undue depreciation of other parts of our public worship. But we believe that this defect is being remedied, and that both prayer and praise receive far more thoughtful attention than they did. But the Nonconformists of England must still give good heed to "the preaching power" that is in them. Their ministers must, in the first place, be preachers; and this for the very Truth's sake.

It was the recognition of this fact that made Mr. Langston sometimes wish more had been demanded by the committee of Wycliffe College, of young men, who, if hereafter they were not preachers, would be nothing. "A muff" may be easily manipulated into a "priest," or even into a "clergyman," according to that old saying (which is getting out of date, however, and which we reproduce, not out of any ill-will, but merely as an illustration), "that the greatest fool of the family is brought up to the Church." When there is a living in the gift of the family, or of some sure patron, why, of course, any preparation that will just enable a man to pass the ordeal of examination is sufficient. But if the Nonconformist minister be characterizable by that expressive monosyllable we have used above, his whole life will be a bitterness and humiliation to himself, at least generally (there are marvellous exceptions), and a disappointment to the churches. First, give us a man, a true and thorough man; and the more he is as a man the better. That he must be a Christian man it is superfluous to add. But having your Christian man, cultivate him well—body and mind; and bid him give heed to the heart as well. Let our colleges, however, demand, in the first place—men; and let our tutors know a man when they see him, and be able to make a better man of him than they find him. Consecrated and cultivated manhood we ask for our pulpits. And the work before us, with sacramentalism on the one hand, and rationalism on the other, absorbing all the life in the Established Church, and a growing self-indulgence and worldliness manifest all around us, calls loudly for vigorous and accomplished Christian manhood to be the characteristic of the Nonconformist pulpit.

Mr. Langston sometimes felt that weak and injudicious friends and committees had, in some instances, encouraged into public life young men who, on all accounts, had far better been left to develop their Christian graces and talents in private life. But this impression of his does not necessarily form any part of this tale, and if any of our readers deem it out of place they are free to consider it a superfluity.

(To be continued.)

HELIOPOLITAN LETTERS, No. II.

A GRANITE PAGE OF PHARAONIC HISTORY, BELONGING TO BIBLICAL TIMES.

HELIOPOLIS, PHENICIAN ERA 3531, MONTH ATHYR.

MY DEAR D—, I have allowed the second month of the Egyptian year, Paophi, as they called it, to glide by without forwarding any letter, so that this belongs to the third. And here, as nobody but your correspondent has ever before availed himself, at least during the last twenty or thirty centuries, of this ancient Phœnician reckoning—grand, is it not, to have an Era all to one's self!—and as you may be a little puzzled to know its meaning, especially as combined with the Egyptian months, I will say a word or two about it. Indeed, I may as well say at once that I propose to take it as the text of this letter.

You must know, then, that a year or two ago Mariette Bey—the naturalised Frenchman whose sagacious and important archaeological discoveries in all parts of the Nile Valley have deservedly earned for him his appointment, with a thousand a year attached to it, of Director of the newest and largest Egyptian Museum in the world, viz., that of Boulaq, the port of Cairo—unearthed a very curious hieroglyphical Tablet or Stela. This granite Stela was remarkable on several accounts; for, first, the locality in which it was found invested it with an unwonted interest. This was San, as the Arabs call the ruins found towards the middle of the hither shore of the Lake Menzaleh, in which ruins Champollion, with the help of the hieroglyphical legends found on the spot, long ago recognised those of the Tanis of the Greeks, and the Zoan of the Bible. The place is about sixty or seventy miles from Matarieh, in a northerly direction, or, say, with a slight trend eastwards. The city which anciently stood on the site of these noteworthy ruins was the metropolis of the Tanite Nome, or county, and was the seat of Manetho's Twenty-first and Twenty-third Dynasties of Pharaohs, to the former of which it is commonly but, perhaps, erroneously, believed Solomon was beholden for his Egyptian Queen. Here also the national Egyptian historian—or, as Boeckh, the profoundest of living scholars, thinks, some learned countryman of Manetho's, who interpolated into his work the glaringly false and malignant account of the Hebrew Exodus, which is endorsed with his name—locates the Jews during their long sojourn in the land of Ham. And since no plausible reason can be assigned for his

having changed the scene of the events; since, again, it is certain that Goshen must have been situated somewhere in this region; and, lastly, since the Biblical name may very well be interpreted, by means of the Coptic, to mean "the field or land of Zoan;" it is not likely that this is one of the apocryphal features in this otherwise utterly distorted and hopelessly anachronistic version of one of the grandest passages in the history of mankind. The pagan writer Artapanus, who a century or so before the Christian Era collected the Egyptian traditions on the subject from the mouths of the Memphite and Heliopolitan gossips—and whose account, side by side with many egregious blunders, as was to be expected, contains many golden grains of pure historical truth, admitting of easy verification by the extant monuments,—Hellenizes the name of the countryside where the Jews were settled into the form *Kaisar*. The compound is racy of the soil; for with the Coptic aspirate inserted, which, you are aware, could not be expressed in the middle of a Greek word, it becomes *Kahi San*, or rather *Kahi Shan*, and, were Egyptian still a living tongue, is the very expression of which the Coptic *fellahs* would make use to designate the district in the midst of which lie the ruins still known as those of San. Even the spiteful heathen slander which we find in Tacitus, and which so riled the fiery Tertullian, that the Jews worshipped an ass's head, points to this locality. For it is a curious fact, and one which throws much light on this seemingly inexplicable fable, that the tutelary deity of Zoan, viz., Typhon, Seth, or Baal (for he is found on the monuments with all these three several names), is commonly represented under the form of that animal. Of course, if, as seems pretty certain, this city was the centre of the Hebrew settlement, it is impossible for the *Christian Spectator* to regard with indifference Mariette Bey's recent excavations at San. For surely here, if anywhere, are to be expected monumental traces of that settlement. Whether any such have as yet come to pass, I am really not aware. I am not in the Saqara Bey's secrets, which he well knows how to guard with true Oriental jealousy. Witness his shameful suppression, for four whole years, of the wonderful Tablet of Memphis, which he delayed publishing until its interest was eclipsed by that of the still more wonderful New and Complete Tablet of Abydos, which, found by his German rival Duemmichen, was not kept from the eyes of the world during as many months.

But you will say I am forgetting the Granite Stela and the Phœnician Era. Not exactly, as you will see in a minute or two, although I own my course, like that of the Nile, is at times a little winding. You remember I told you I am a rivers' rights man. The San excavations of the French Bey, who has

taken up his abode at the base of the Pyramids, if they have hitherto yielded, at least so far as I know, no footprints of the enslaved Israelites, have at any rate brought into clear daylight the monumental remains of a people with whom Josephus, and Clement of Alexandria, with many other ancient writers, Jewish and Christian, have managed to confound them. You are aware that I allude to the conquering Asiatic nomades, who, under their Hykshos, or Shepherd Kings, invaded, conquered, and held possession of Egypt for more than five hundred years. Their great stronghold, we are told by Manetho, as extracted by Josephus, was called Ha-Var, and he adds, that the city was sacred to Typhon. Now it turns out that Ha-Var, or Ha-Val (for the ancient Egyptians knew no more of any distinction between the letters R and L than do the modern Chinese), was the primeval sacred name of Zoan, and the appellation means House, or Temple of Baal, which, as already observed, we find in the hieroglyphical records to be one of the names of Typhon. Of the interchangeableness of V and B, which, in Hebrew and other Semitic languages are distinguished by nothing but a diacritical point, you will not need to be reminded. Accordingly the scutcheons, or royal rings inclosing their names, of several of these Shepherd Kings, distinctly recognizable as such by comparison with their Greek names handed down from Manetho, have been found at San. One of them appears on our Granite Stela, to which, you see, I have come round at last. This fact, of course, greatly enhances its interest and augments its value in a historical point of view, since not only are these Hykshos scutcheons found nowhere save at San, but even there very few instances of the kind have hitherto been met with. But, although the Stela bears the cartouche of this Hykshos Pharaoh Seth—who, you see, was named after the divinity in whose temple it was found—yet its erection and the act of worship to this god which it commemorates are not attributed to him, but to Ramses the Great, or Sesostris, as the Greeks called him, after another of his monumental names. For even on this point it has turned out that our German critics, Lepsius, Bunsen, and the rest were overhasty, as usual, in denying Sesostris to be a monumental appellation of this or, indeed, of any Pharaoh. The inscription says that King Ramses, by the intermediary of a great officer of state, also named Seth, like the Hykshos king and the god, paid this act of religious homage on his own behalf and on that of his royal father, whose scutcheon also reads Seth, and in the name of his ancestors in general. But if it is curious thus to see Ramses the Great in adoration before the national god of the hated Shepherds, it is still more so to find the Stela dated, not by the regnal year of the reigning king, according to the uniform

rule, to which this is the only exception as yet known, *but in the four hundredth year of the Hykshos monarch Seth*. In short, the Stela, so remarkable in other respects, is unique in this,—that it affords the only instance as yet met with on a hieroglyphical inscription of *dating by means of an Era*. This is the Phœnician Era, as for reasons renderable I call it, and which, since Sesostris, is not known to have been employed in dating any document until it was used for the purpose in these Heliopolitan Letters. Still more grand, is it not?

But what if its epoch has been wrongly determined? Alas! then conceit must be punished with deserved contempt, and I must humbly bare my back to the scourge. And to tell you the truth, I am not quite sure that, after all, I have not been writing these letters in next September and November respectively. Or rather, to make a clean breast of it, I feel pretty certain that I have — done no such thing; for, on reflection, I find that the error is the other way, as in the case of the Christian Era, which everybody owns to be several years too low. Of course, however, the mistake should be rectified, and, as in this case I am happily the only person to be consulted, this is easily done. Please, therefore, to take notice, that the despatch which I hope to send by next opportunity, will be dated about three years hence. The blunder was due, partly, to an arithmetical slip into which I was betrayed in my hurried calculations, and partly to my ignorance of the fact, that within the last few months, Dr. Hincks, with the help of a Greek astronomical papyrus, had demonstrated that the famous Egyptian Era of Menophres, referred to by the mathematician Theon of Alexandria, as well as by the Christian Father Clement of the same city, began not in B.C. 1322, according to the commonly received opinion, but in B.C. 1323. This rectification belonged of right to the illustrious scholar, for whom, with the learning and piety of an Ussher, the Beresford-ridden Irish Church of our day can find, even in his green old age, no higher employment than the cure of the souls of a handful of bog-trotters at Killyleigh. For it is to him the world is indebted for the first correct solution of the momentous problem, Who is this Pharaoh Menophres, in whose reign fell, as the learned Theon says, the astronomical coincidence of which he speaks, and which our Idelers and Biots tell us belongs to one of the four years B.C. 1325-2, and which the authority of Censorinus plainly assigns to B.C. 1323? Dr. Hincks has solidly proved, that it can be no other than the name which all Egyptologists agree in reading *Men-peh-ra*, and which they are no less unanimous in attributing to the grandfather of the king, Ramses the Great, who set up in the Temple of Seth at Ha-Bal, or Zoan, our granite Quatercentenary Stela. You will not have forgotten that Lepsius and Bunsen, whose *dicta* on the subject were widely trumpeted forth

in the *Essays and Reviews* as quite decisive in favour of the pseudo-Manetho's Exodus story, and, accordingly, quite destructive of the historical character of the Biblical narrative, identified Theon's king with the son of Sesostris, whose monumental name they read, correctly enough doubtless, Mer-n-Ptah, and who is no less undeniably the same with the Menophthes, under whom Manetho, as they say, or his mask, as Boeckh suggests, dates the extrusion from Egypt of a horde of leprous robbers, under the leadership of Moses. So confident was Lepsius as to his having set at rest for ever this important question of the era of Menophres, that when, during his visit to Egypt in 1842, he celebrated along with his party the 47th birthday of his royal patron, the late Frederick William IV. of Prussia, he caused a magnificent hieroglyphical inscription to be engraved at the entrance of the Great Pyramid in memory of the event, concluding with the following date: "In the tenth month, and the fifteenth day, on the seven-and-fortieth birthday of his Majesty, on the pyramid of Cheops; in the third year, the fifth month, the ninth of the Government of his Majesty; in the year 3164 from the commencement of the Sothiac Period under King Menephthes." Now since Menephthes has no more right to this celebrated Sothiac or Dogstar era than you or I—having lived, as the four intermediate generations, the testimony of Manetho, and the monuments all concur in showing—about 120 years after the Menophres of Theon, as no one with a head on his shoulders will doubt within less than ten years hence, the accession of the late Frederick William of Prussia is here actually dated about a century from the present time.

What a warning, you will say, to me, not to be too sure about my Phœnician Era. Most impressive, I must frankly own; and the more so since I am bound to add, that no Egyptologist, not excepting Dr. Hincks, whose piercing vision and clear insight are very rarely at fault, has observed that upon which my calculation is based. As for the rest, they are not on the look-out for such indications as this invaluable Quatercentenary Stela offers to those who have eyes for them, and Mariette's superficial paper upon it, which accompanied the engraving of the monument in the March number of the *Revue Archéologique* may be taken as a type of the sort of discussion which it has hitherto called forth. There, however, on the granite, is the astronomical note of time, which they have contrived to overlook, as they have scores of others on the monuments, and which binds, with all the rigour of a law of nature, this monumental date on our San inscription, viz., the 4th of the month Messori in the 400th year of the Era named after the Hykshos Pharaoh Seth, to the 28th of July B.C. 1269. I am not about to afflict you with any details as to

the nature of this astronomical date indicated on the Stela, nor with the process of its reduction. This would involve a good deal of abstruse disquisition, and some delicate calculations, such as would better befit a scientific journal than the more popular pages of the *Christian Spectator*. You will take my word for the fact, at least *pro tem*. Meanwhile there is a sort of rule of thumb verification of my assertion, which your numerous intelligent readers will easily apply for themselves. It has already been remarked by Mariette and others who have written on this most interesting and precious inscription, that in it the royal worshipper, Ramses the Great, mentions his father Seth by name, and in such a way as to imply that he was still living at the time when this act of adoration to the tutelary divinity of the Hykshos, in the city named after him, and which was the old seat of Hykshos power, was performed. The Stela, therefore, dates from the close of the reign of the father, and the beginning of the sixty-six years' reign (found not only in Manetho, but also expressly said to have lasted precisely that number of years in a Stela engraved under Ramses IV, and only just published by the Vicomte de Roug ) of his son, Sesostris. Let us now see how the calculation stands. The above date, 28th July B.C. 1269 falls in the 55th year of Dr. Hincks's Revised Era of Menophres. But according to Manetho, whose authority the monumental confirmation just cited surely warns us not to slight, the last year of Seth, the father of Ramses the Great, was precisely his 55th. Moreover, in his *first year*, this more warlike father of the warlike Sesostris, is shown, by contemporary monuments, to have assumed a title, which, as long ago pointed out by Brugsch and others, palpably alludes to the grand astronomical epoch which Theon connects with the name of his royal father Menophres. To Menophres, under his other principal name, Ramses (for you are aware that each Pharaoh bore two), Manetho assigns a reign of one year and four months, probably meaning thereby the time during which he ruled before his associating his son Seth in the empire. For that he did so associate his son we have monumental proof. The case, therefore, you will see is pretty complete, even apart from the asserted astronomical indication on the already famous Quatercentenary Stela of San; and the confirmation afforded by this priceless memorial of the past to Dr. Hincks's masterly identification, arrived at six or seven years ago, and therefore long before the trenches at San were opened, is manifestly a result of transcendent value.

But why do I style this Monumental Era of the Hykshos monarch Seth a Phœnician one? That also I will tell you. The fact is that this Era, although Sesostris and Origen Omicron are the only persons as yet known to have used it in dating their

acts, is, happily, not altogether unknown to Greek historical tradition. Do you not remember that the illustrious teacher of my still greater namesake, Clement of Alexandria, dates the Jewish Exodus 345 years before the beginning of the Sothiac Period, or, in other words, before the Era of Menophres? Add to these 345 years *before* this later era, the fifty-fifth year *of* that era, to which, as we have seen, belongs the act of worship recorded on the San Stela, and we have precisely the 400th year mentioned on our granite record! As all the critics have seen, Clement like Josephus has confounded the Israelites with the Hykshos. But what the critics have *not* seen is this, that, whereas Josephus makes the Hebrew exodus synchronize with the overthrow of the dynasty, of which our Hykshos Sethos was the first king, and, accordingly, distinctly dates it (with Manetho, and with a contemporary epitaph of a warrior who fought in the campaign, and was actually present at the capitulation of Ha-Bal), in the sixth year of Amasis, the chief of the great Eighteenth Dynasty, and the liberator of Egypt from this hateful foreign yoke; Clement, on the other hand, identifies the Biblical event with the expulsion of an *earlier* race of Hykshos by the Seth from whose accession the Quatercentenary Stela is dated. Our Manethonian fragments and lists, wretchedly mutilated as they are, expressly distinguish between Arab and Phœnician Hykshos or Shepherd kings. Conon also, a respectable historical writer of the Augustan age, in a fragment preserved by Photius, speaks explicitly of a Phœnician conquest of Egypt, which extended even to Thebes. He even makes the important addition, which ought surely to wake up those Bœotian classicists themselves to some languid interest in our San inscription, that Cadmus the Phœnician went out thence to found Thebes in Greece. For here we have the Monumental Era of that momentous conquest before our eyes. You see it is in its origin a *political* era, although as intimately connected with the history of the introduction of letters into Greece, it would seem to merit the appellation of the Era of Western Civilization. The Phœnician Seth (named after his national god, as you see, whose other appellation Bal or Bel, appears, as I need not remind you, in almost all Phœnician and Carthaginian names*) ousted the Arab or, perhaps, Philistine† Hykshos, with whose expulsion our good Clement has confounded the Jewish Exode, although, as we see, the very learned Alexan-

* You remember Bunsen's *rapprochement* between what he regards as the ethnographical name Adam (=Edom, meaning *Red*, as Phœnix likewise does), and that of his son Seth, the tutelary divinity of the Phœnicians. Is the ingenious and daring idea, wholly a mistake, or only a half-truth?

† A felicitous emendation made by Movers in the corrupt text of Manetho would give us a Philistine dynasty of Hykshos.

drian Church Father has given with perfect accuracy, as he naturally could not fail to do, the date of the event he had in view. In place of the expelled dynasty, Seth established his own, and inaugurated a new era from the year of his seating himself upon the throne of the Pharaohs. His family kept possession of it for nearly a hundred years, when, after losing Memphis under the father of the Theban liberator Amasis, the Phœnician Hykshos, were at last forced, in the sixth year of this first king of Manetho's Eighteenth Dynasty, to the capitulation of "Ha-Bal the Great," as this city is styled on the monuments (in harmony with Manetho, who makes it twice the size of ancient Rome), on condition of their quitting the country *en masse*. It is with this latter event that Josephus expressly identifies the exodus of his people, with which it had no more to do than the former Hykshos expulsion.

And now our granite Stela, which, especially with the light shed on it by the passage in Clement, proves of such immense value in helping us to unravel the tangled Pharaonic history during these four eventful centuries, becomes itself, in its turn, perfectly intelligible. At the very outset of his reign, as we known from his monuments, as well as from Manetho and Herodotus, Ramses the Great, or Sesostris, as the Father of History calls him, made war against the Phœnicians. Herodotus adds, that he himself had seen in Phœnicia the hieroglyphical stelæ on which the Egyptian conqueror's deeds were recorded. *And there they have been found, near Beirut, in our days*, and any one who wishes may see engravings of them at the British Museum, if he cannot afford to pay sixty or seventy guineas for a copy of Lepsius's magnificent work on the Egyptian Monuments.* The earliest of them bears date in the Pharaoh's *second year*. The war, therefore, must have been commenced in his *first*; and, as the Egyptians like the Romans and all other religious nations of antiquity, never made war against a people's gods, it was inaugurated, as you are aware was the invariable Roman custom, with a solemn propitiatory act of worship to the tutelary divinity of the enemy. That is the very attitude in which we find Ramses the Great depicted on the upper register of our Stela, in the act of making a libation to Seth, the god of the Phœnician Hykshos. The name of the young Pharaoh's father is, doubtless, a reminiscence of some similar act of propitiation to the same god Seth, performed as the indispensable preliminary to some earlier war against the Phœnicians. At this simple and natural point of view, everything, you see, is explained.

* Leps. *Denkmäler*, Abth. III. Bl. 197.

Now, for just a couple of corollaries, out of the many which might be deduced. First, the vaunted Egyptian account of the Exodus, which, on the strength of an unproved connection (and irrelevant, even if it were proved)* between the name of the imaginary treasure-city Raameses (our word *Magazine* is the derivative, and the more exact rendering of the Hebrew *Masken-oth*) and our king Ramses, has gained such wide currency, to the disparagement of the Pentateuch, is dashed in pieces against the granite facts of the San Stela, even if there were no other evidence against it. For even so fervid a worshipper of Bunsen as Dr. Williams, would hardly venture to date the Exodus barely a couple of centuries before the building of the Temple. And to this corollary, may I not tack on by way of *scholium*, just to show that Origen Omicron has not altogether lost sight of his promised self-vindication, the practical inference, that in these days of shallow criticism and deepening doubt, a theologian may (from an unscottish point of view, of course) possibly find his account in the study of a hieroglyphical Stela? The second corollary is, that the restoration of what has always seemed the hopelessly-confused Manethonian tradition as to the all-important score of reigns embraced within the 400 years of our Stela is now quite plain sailing. And since the best way of showing a thing is easy, is to do it, here is the table:—[See opposite page.]

You observe a gap, do you not, at the Theban No. IV. on the Manethonian side of the Table? Now it cannot be Manetho who has left out the name of Thothmes II., with which the monuments enable us to fill it up. For the still remaining note of kin, viz., that Queen Amenses was the *sister* of her immediate predecessor, as she herself says in her extant inscriptions she was the sister of the omitted king, demonstrably proves that there could not possibly have been any such gap when the Greek papyrus containing his history left the "healing-chamber of the soul" (the Egyptian name for a library) in the now buried temple of the Sun yonder, in which this famous work was composed by the learned Sebhennytan, who was then invested with the dignity of its High Priest. Yet, strange to say, the omission of this name, so conspicuous by its absence, is found in every one of our extant lists. Is it possible that this *gap* has any connection with the *interpolation*, which the astute Boeckh hinted at more than twenty years ago, of the *Exodus story*, which has since found so much favour with the learned? It is a curious fact that the only known dated inscription of this king is of his *second* year, so that

* For the custodians of the sacred records had a perfect right to modernize an unintelligible name, as any such officer (Dr. Black, for instance, of our own Record Office,) will tell you.

TABLE OF REIGNS OF PHARAOKH COMPRISED WITHIN THE DATE OF THE QUATER CENTENARY STELA.

MANATHO (as in our oldest excerptor, Josephus, but with supplements and emendations on the authority of our other extractors, Africanus, Eusebius, Syncellus, &c.)			THE MONUMENTAL NAMES, with filiation and other notes of kin, and the like, so far as known.	
Years of Phara. Era.	Years of Phara. Era.	Reigned Year	Years B.C. (From Autumn)	
PHENICIAN (HYKSHOS) PHARAOKH.				
I.	1	Set-Aa Seth	50	1669
II.	51	Archles	31	1619
III.	82	Apophi, reigned 15 years, in all of which before capture of Ha-Bal	10	1588
NATIVE EGYPTIAN (THEBAN) PHARAOKH.				
I.	92	Kan Ph-Ra Amos	26	1578
II.	97	Capture of Ha-Bal in his sixth year	21	1573
III.	118	Amenophth	13	1552
IV.	139	Chebro	[1]	1531
V.	152	Amenses, said to be "Sister" of her predecessor	22	1518
	153			1517
	175	Mesphra Tuthmos.	26	1495
	201	Aaishphri	22	1469
	223	Tuthmos.	9	1447
	232	Amenophth	35	1438
	267	Thutangk Hakanchres	12	1403
	279	Rathos	6	1391
	285	Achenethre	12	1385
	297	Acherre	12	1373
	309	Hor	35	1361
	344	Menophre Ramses	2	1326
	346	Seth	55	1324
	400	His last, conjointly with his son Ramses (the Great)		1270
Seth-Aa Seth (or Seti) Not yet discovered.				
Ahpepi				
Han Ph-Ra Aahmes, father of Amenhotep (I), father of Cha-na-Ra Thothmes (I), father of Thothmes (II), Brother of Amense-t, sister of and Regent in name of Men-shpr-Ra Thothmes (III), father of Aa-shpru Amenhotep (II), father of Thothmes (IV), father of Amenhotep (III), father of Thut-Ank Hak-An-Res. Rathos, son-in-law of Ach-ank-Atin-Ra. Achi-[Ra] Chief-Fan-Bearer under Predecessor. Hor. Men-ph-Ra Ramses (I), father of Seth (or Seti), father of Ramses (II).				

although he must have reigned one year complete (reckoned from the Egyptian New Year's Day preceding his actual accession, as the regnal years of the Pharaohs, you know, were always counted) he may not have lived out a second, which would very well accord with the supposition of his being the slippery Pharaoh of the Exodus. Another curious fact is, that the only mention of the *Red Sea* hitherto met with on the monuments occurs precisely in an inscription of his reign. Unfortunately it is still unpublished, and I derive my knowledge of the fact from a pamphlet which the illustrious French Egyptologist, M. Chabas, was lately good enough to send me. Another thing I will just mention, although, since, in the first place, if, as my friend, M. Chabas, wrote me a few months back, the date of the reign of Sesostris cannot be determined within a latitude of two hundred years; since, again, there are at least the same number of different opinions as to the epoch of the Exodus; and, lastly, since the policemen on the look-out for this "wanted" Pharaoh, must be no less numerous, what I am about to state may, of course, be nothing more than an odd sort of coincidence. But, no; I won't state it. For why should I bore you and your excellent readers with the crotchets of my old college chum, Nogo (poor fellow, I wonder what has become of him!), and the pamphlet he perpetrated five or six years ago? In said pamphlet he professed to have proved, by means of a couple of dates, which he said were astronomical, and which he had picked out from translations of inscriptions of Thothmes III., done by Birch and Brugsch (for he knew nothing of the hieroglyphics himself), together with an incidental mention of an anniversary celebration by that king of his own accession to the crown, which he is known to have always dated from the death of his brother Thothmes II.,* that the throne must have been vacated by this latter B.C. 1515; and that too on the very day which we may gather from the story in the Pentateuch to have been the date of Pharaoh's overthrow in the Red Sea. He was very confident in his calculations, and one day much astonished a mutual Christian friend, a respectable stockbroker in the City, by looking up from the *Times*, which he seemed to be busily reading in the office, and exclaiming, as if waking up from a reverie, "Yes, the beggar *was* drowned." He had the assurance to send a copy to each of the Bishops, not forgetting Sodor and Man, at the time when every man of them was in an evangelical *sudor* with the heat of the Colenso controversy, little dreaming (poor unpractical head as his was!) that instead of that being a reason for their paying any attention to it, it was the very reverse. Of course not one of their lordships wasted half a dip of ink upon him and his

* Hence the monuments record his 47th year.

trash, although the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whom he had incidentally mentioned in a note, and to whom he also sent a copy, acknowledged it by return of post from Downing Street in a handsome letter of thanks containing the assurance that he should read it with the greatest interest.

Well, accidental hit or not, it really looks as if the Granite Stela were in league with Nogo. I have no doubt he would insist that, taking into account the difference between the Hykshos Egyptian and the Native Egyptian Kalendars, it proves his forecast date to be literally exact. But supposing it to be only a pretty close approximation to the truth, you see Moses must have been a stalwart young man of three or four-and-twenty at the date of the Capitulation of Ha-Bal, and as an adopted prince of the Pharaonic court may very well have taken part in that gigantic religious war, as no less than a political and international struggle it is proved by the Sallier Hieratic Papyrus to have been. And, dim as the affair now looks through the haze of between thirty and forty centuries, we may be sure that with a quarter of a million fighting men on the weaker side, and the siege, lasting several years, of a city certainly not less in its dimensions than that the ruins of which the French have just discovered in Cambodgia, clustering for many miles round a temple vaster than St. Peter's at Rome, this tussle for all that men held dearest, which then raged around the shores of the now placid Lake Menzaleh, must have left deep impressions on the spectators, and still more on the actors in the bloody and fratricidal drama. You are aware that tradition actually states that Moses led the Pharaoh's troops in an Ethiopian war, such as at a later period in his reign Kan (meaning in Egyptian pretty much what the Tartar word *khan* does, viz., lord, master, possessor, &c.), who, along with that royal appellation, bore the title of his father Phera, as well as the family name Amos, is known from the monuments to have engaged with twice that number in the beleaguering army. But you will have already caught my drift. You see that I have my eye on the tragic story in Gen. IV., of the First Quarrel; also a religious one, between the tiller of the soil, wicked, murderous Kain, and the Shepherd He-Bel (*see margin*), whose blood cried from the ground, but whom our sorrowing mother Eve afterwards thankfully saw replaced by her later-born son Seth. I hope I am duly sensible to the possibility that the thought which haunts me may have glided into my heart from the depths below, as all thoughts come either thence or from the depths above. If you are as doughty a demonologist, and as well up in casuistic divinity, as every Christian theologian should be, you will, perhaps, be able to detect and exorcise the evil spirit, if it be one.

But I seem to see as clearly almost as I see anything, that in the nomenclature of that history, as well as in the Divine pathos of the simple story, we have distinct traces of the truest heavenly inspiration working upon the personal feelings and impressions of an actual participator in the most terrible war within the Mosaic horizon. For me, that fourth chapter of Genesis would not be more certainly Mosaic, had I seen him write the autograph. Whence also, I infer two things. First, that the newest German criticism of the Pentateuch, which pronounces this throughout Jehovistic passage to have been written at the earliest not before the eighth century B.C., needs itself to be most sharply criticised. Secondly, that that eloquent denouncer of Germanism, Dr. Boanerges Slipslop, ought to be forced by his female admirers himself to set about studying not only German but Egyptian, the Hebrew of the New Reformation, instead of sneering at your eccentric correspondent,

ORIGEN OMICRON.

THE LIFE OF FREDERICK ROBERTSON.

SECOND PAPER.

It is impossible to estimate Mr. Robertson's theology aright without constantly remembering that it was a *reaction*; and that of all reactions the most determined is a man's sorrowful recoil from his own early enthusiasms. Half the bitterness which we trace in the saddest of these letters is, in reality, the writer's anger with his former self. He had adopted a belief, but not a theology; and suffered his views to remain unquestioned, while around them some gathered all the beautiful associations of early faith and love. He had inquired, indeed, into opposing forms of religious belief, but had found them unsound. These forms, of which the typical one was Tractarianism, had engaged all his attention during the most formative portion of his career. The teachers were not yet in Oxford who would have awakened other questionings in the young student's mind; or if they were they were unheeded in the ardour with which he tested the dogmas which John Henry Newman would have substituted for the creed of his childhood. Examined by those contrasts, and in that light, the creed seemed irrefragable, and he began joyously to preach it before he had ever tested it in other ways. Hence he believed, or if we may be allowed the expression, he believed

that he believed, certain things which he soon found cause to repudiate, and in repudiating to detest.

For example, he had no doubt been accustomed to view the Atonement as a literal transfer of penalty. He had thought that the very punishment of all who were to be saved had been borne by the infinite Surety. Christ, therefore, did suffer literally the infliction of the righteous wrath of God, in the manner and to the extent to which the elect would have endured it, save that the eternity of woe which their limited natures must have borne found its equivalent in the brief duration through which the curse descended upon His Infinite ! We state this baldly enough, but it is what even yet some persons believe. Such is the doctrine against which Mr. Robertson directs his passionate protest: *he*, it is plain, identifies it with the popular Calvinistic theory of atonement, and therefore is it clear that such was his old belief. Now this creed could not but have been flung off utterly and for ever, so soon as the question fairly arose as to its possible reconciliation with the dictates of a sound moral philosophy and with the Scripture revelation of Divine Love. In such a sense, we need not stay to prove to our readers, guilt and penalty cannot be transferred, nor could such a storm of wrath have ever beaten on His soul who from the very depth of His sorrow cried in Gethsemane, *My Father*, and upon the Cross, *My God*.

Thus far, then, we do not wonder that the reverent and loving spirit discarded the old belief as intolerable. Nor can we be greatly surprised, although we mourn, that he should never have given his earnest attention to that form of doctrine which, apart from these horrible conceptions, asserts the connexion of the scene on Calvary with eternal justice no less than with eternal love. As it is, while the denials of Robertson are distinct and eager, his positive teachings are vague. But he shall speak fully for himself, in one of the most interesting of his letters.

"Now about the sermon. 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me,' certainly was the cry of a human soul in sharp anguish oppressed with doubts and misgivings. What else could it be? Was He not tried on all points, like as we are? What could it be that suffered but a human soul? Deity is impassible. God was not angry with Him; God could not be angry with self-sacrificing love. He could not, without denying His own nature, annex hell—that is, an evil conscience and remorse—to perfect goodness. Christ endured the penalty of imputed sin, the sins of others, but imputed sin is not actual sin, though constantly we see it bear the penalty of such—that is, be punished as such. 'The chastisement of our iniquities was upon Him.' It was not merely the 'penalty of His own daring' that He bore; He bore the penalty of our transgressions. He crushed the head of the serpent evil, which would otherwise have crushed us, and the fang pierced Him. There is a parallel in the death of Socrates, so far as martyrdom goes; but *His* death was sacrifice, not merely martyrdom; Socrates was simply true to his convictions, and suffered for them. He distinctly came

that we might have life, and have it more abundantly. He alone of all that are woman-born conceived the idea of a contest with evil for the world's sake.

"Many have conflicted with single forms of evil—that of their own country, that in their own profession—and in the conflict have been bruised; but He did battle with evil—not Jewish evil only, but the world's evil,—evil in its manifold forms, grappling with it in its home, all evil. Socrates sanctified some kinds of the most horrible licentiousness: he was only a philosophical reformer. He came not to reform the Jewish church or Jewish state; he had no system or plan of that kind, nor did he fall a martyr to any such scheme. It was the overthrow of sin for which He came, with a glance reaching over the ages.

"The Son of Man: man's Redeemer. It was not a sacrifice for a view of a truth, but for the truth. This answers the question whether there are not some sins, not at all of the nature of those which crucified Christ. There are none such. Sin is the genus of which a few particular manifestations are but the species. The will which has shaken itself free from God's will, is the central principle of sin. It matters not whether this shows itself as hypocrisy, or cruelty, or falsehood, or licentiousness; it is part of the mighty principle of that kingdom whose prince had nothing in Christ. Perhaps, in actual fact, the first two of these had the chief hand in His destruction, but that was, so to speak, an accident, and not essential. Had He come into contact with Herod, He would have perished as the Baptist did, though the Baptist was only a martyr.

"And, again, 'they who crucified Him hated Him,' because their deeds were evil. "What particular sins can you with certainty except from those evil deeds, and how could you be sure that any one such sin was not the cause of all the rest in their character? No. I believe that all sins are of the same family. Impure love is only a form of hate and cruelty, and easily passes into them, and I could not say that those men were not cruel just because they were impure, nor that they were not oppressors, just because they were avaricious, and so on. "By which logical connection I believe, even in this way, we could bring in every form of sin guilty of the death of Jesus Christ. He was on the one side, they on the other. He sought His Father's will, and all men who seek their own will are of the party of His crucifiers.

"There was some cavilling at that sermon, much misrepresentation, much bitterness, but the chief objections I have heard were in the way of suggested consequences, 'if so,' 'then'—with which I do not meddle. Let them draw the consequences; I state truths.

"The only tangible point they could fasten on, was the assertion that Christ bore imputed sin, but not the wrath of God, on which point I defy an attack. They have not a single syllable to support what they say. It is as pure an addition to the Bible as ever was made by Romanism."—Pp. 307—9, vol. i.

Now here is truth, no doubt, but one-sided and incomplete. The question returns, *Why* must goodness, face to face with guilt, thus fearfully suffer? Nor is it the question of the Cross alone. The "participation of Christ's sufferings"—to use Bible language—is a thing realised wherever manhood is pure, and good, and true. None better understood this than Robertson himself. How was it that with his philosophic insight he did not pause to ask *why* this must be? Why should not

goodness, so infinitely stronger than evil, prove its strength by a bloodless victory? Why must the seed of the serpent bruise the heel of the seed of the woman before its own head can be crushed? Is there any reason for this—reason that we can discern—in the requirements of eternal justice? The Epistle to the Romans at least seems to say that there is; and the brightest and best modern theology sets itself earnestly, anxiously, to understand, to illustrate, and to vindicate the testimony. True, we no longer draw our illustrations from “the barbarian Zaleucus,” or even from the tender story of Damon and Pythias. Religious thought has entered a higher, more spiritual region. A “theory of the atonement” may possibly be thus shown as impossible to our faculties. Faith may take the place of dogma, but it will need to be fortified by something deeper than the views which Mr. Robertson and writers of his school have given us. Briefly, any explanation of the atonement must be insufficient which ignores its relation to eternal law. The irresistible appeal to the hearts of men we earnestly acknowledge; but there is also the satisfaction of a righteous claim. The “justification” of which the Apostle speaks so much—the “counting faith for righteousness”—is surely more than the Divine insight, which beholds the full river in the slender rill, the glory of tropical vegetation in the polar lichens, the consummation of the perfect life in the incipient germs of faith and piety. Hence we regard the system of Robertson as fatally incomplete, and more than all do we long that he could have obtained in the crisis of his life the guidance of some of those bright, strong intellects who have so successfully united a repudiation, emphatic as Robertson’s, oft he old “commercial” view, with the firm and earnest assertion of the propitiatory sacrifice.*

We quite admit that Robertson might have had to look long and far for such sympathy as, we believe, would have kept him nearer to central truth. His picture of the Church of England is unflattering; but, fifteen years ago more than now, it must be held as only too true.

“No! the Church of England will endure no chivalry, no dash, no effervescing enthusiasm.

“She cannot turn it to account as Rome turns that of her Loyolas and Xaviers. We bear nothing but sober, prosaic routine; and the moment anyone with heart and nerve, fit to be leader of a forlorn hope, appears, we call him a dangerous man, and exasperate him by cold, unsympathising reproofs, till he becomes a dissenter and a demagogue. . . . Well, I suppose, God will punish us, if in no other way, by banishing from us all noble spirits like Newman and Manning in one direction, and men like Kingsley in another,—leaving us to flounder in the mud of common-place, unable to rise or sink above the dead level. Day by day my hopes are

* To go no further, we may cite the Essays in “Aids to Faith.”

sinking. We dare not say the things we feel. Who can? Who possibly may, when 'Records,' 'Guardians,' brother ministers, and lay hearers, are ready at every turn to call out, Heterodoxy? It is bondage more than Roman. And if a man sets his face like a flint, and desperately runs amuck with his eyes shut, caring not who is offended, then he injures his own spirit, becomes, like noble Carlyle, ferocious, and loses the stream of living waters in a dry desert sand,—fructifying nothing, but only festering into swamp shallows." . . . p. 14, vol. ii.

What was he to do? His loneliness was forced upon him. Yet it was with bitter sadness that he accepted his lot. Some of his friends were ready to congratulate him that amid the seething confusions of the Church of England he was able stedfastly to preserve his independence, and to maintain his position, as on a height of philosophic thought "*turbantibus aquora ventis.*" To such persons, how mournfully he replies—

"If he thinks that what he calls a philosophic height above contending parties is a position which any man can select for his own comfort and retirement, he miscalculates greatly. If he supposes that the desire to discern the soul of goodness in things evil—to recognise the truth which lies at the root of error, and to assimilate the good in all sects and all men rather than magnify evil—is a plan which will conciliate the regard of all, secure a man's own peace, 'and of course bring with it great popularity with the multitude,' I can earnestly assure the writer that whenever he will try the experiment, he will find out his mistake. He will, perhaps, then see a new light reflected upon the expression, 'when I speak of peace, they will make them ready for the battle.' He will find himself, to his painful surprise, charged on the one side for his earnestness with heresy, and on the other for his charity with latitudinarianism. His desire to exalt the spirit will be construed into irreverence for the latter, his setting light by maxims into a want of zeal for principles, his distinction between rules and spirit into lawlessness. He will find his attempt to love men, and his yearnings for their sympathy, met by suspicions of his motives and malignant slanders upon his life; his passionate desire to reach ideas instead of words, and get to the root of what men mean, he will find treated even by those who think that they are candid, as the gratification of a literary taste and the affectation of philosophic height above the strife of human existence. I would not recommend him to try that 'philosophic height' which he thinks so self-indulgent, unless he has the hardihood to face the keenest winds that blow over all lonely places, whether lonely heights or lonely flats. If he can steel his heart against distrust and suspicion; if he can dare to be pronounced dangerous by the ignorant; hinted at by his brethren in public and warned against in private; if he can resolve to be struck on every side, and not strike again—giving all quarter and asking none: if he can struggle in the dark with the prayer for light of Ajax on his lips, in silence and alone, then let him adopt the line which seems so easy, and be fair and generous, and chivalrous to all. But if he expects from it, of course, considerable self-applause and great popularity with the multitude, I can tell him that they are not the rewards of *that* path. Rather let him be content to remain a partisan, and call himself by some name,—Churchman, Evangelical, or Tractarian. Then he will be abused by many; but his party will defend him."—Page 180. vol. ii.

Perhaps the most striking thing in these volumes is the entire absence of all disclosure respecting those intellectual

processes which, in the Cheltenham days, and during Robertson's lonely wanderings in the Tyrol, determined his later beliefs. The solitary journey amid the mountains was but too exact a type of the path by which he sought the attainment of truth. Only the Tyrolese *jäger*, often, was by his side; and, in one of his lectures, he describes the fresh delight of companionship with that frank, untutored nature. But this very intercourse, whilst he enjoyed it most, did but remove him farther from intellects and hearts most like his own. There were depths in Robertson which could never disclose themselves, even by one single glimpse, to his honest companion; and it was a relief to him not to feel called in any measure to disclose them. So was it through many a step, hereafter taken, in the mountain lands of thought. Many were by his side, and in their fellowship he unfeignedly rejoiced. He could talk to them in their own fashion, counselling, helping, stimulating—giving and receiving the true sympathy of brotherly hearts: while yet there was a universe of glory and terror around, on which they looked with cold, unquestioning eye, and where his spirit felt itself alone. Again and again the sense of this solitude breathes through the letters. It is from his own heart that he writes to a troubled inquirer after truth, "Dare to be alone with God!" Yet, we fearlessly say, such loneliness, beside the sorrow and vain yearning which it brought, was harmful. A mind thrown upon itself will be unduly determined by its *emotions*. The countenance of a man "sharpeneth" his friend by the requiring, among other things, that the thought shall be thrown into shape for the purpose of communication. Robertson was no mystic, but one characteristic of mysticism was enstamped upon his deepest thoughts. He had never argued them out: he only felt them to be true. The intellectual process, for which he had, perhaps, no patience—certainly no time, in the rapidity of his transition from one belief to another—might not have materially altered his later views, but would at least have modified and guarded them. Would that he could have met with but one friend, entirely sympathetic with his earnest devoutness, and fearless to follow him into his most anxious speculations, yet able to test all his conclusions by a clear, calm logic! As it was, he never seems to have measured his strength with an equal in theology. On the one hand he had admiring disciples, to whom his word was an oracle, and whose occasional inquiries sought not defence but exposition: on the other were railing critics, to whom he knew it was useless to explain himself, who could not be fair to him if they would, and who would not if they could. To his own insight therefore he was left, and to the light of God. Was not this enough?—it may be asked. In one sense, assuredly: enough to keep him true to

conscience, true to Christ, whom he loved with an intensity of personal affection that fills us with a reverent awe almost as if we had seen the beloved disciple leaning on His bosom; but not enough to give him consciously his true place in the great company of believers. His doctrine was, in his expressions of it, too much of an idiosyncrasy, too little catholic. Disdaining, with all the scorn of an honest man, that sect of the Anglican church in which he had been unfortunately reared, and looking down from a distance on what he calls "dissenting Evangelical vulgarisms," he failed to the last to realize his kindredship with the community of noble souls which he who seeks shall find. In such a fellowship, his convictions would at least have been more guardedly stated; his denials would have been less impetuous and passionate, and the sorrow born of voluntary loneliness and sharpened by inevitable misunderstanding would never have become so morbidly excessive.

Yet it would be wrong to conclude that his life was all unhappy. The Sermons and the Letters must be taken together, if we desire to understand the whole man. A different mental mood prevails in each, and both belonged to the character. In the pulpit, when braced by the sense of duty, and strong in the conviction of truth, he was resolute, cheerful, even exultant. So was it in his pastoral intercourse. When he had to warn, to comfort, or to guide those who trusted to his aid, there was neither hesitation nor depression. The courage of heart was then equalled only by the geniality of tone. But the reaction was the greater afterwards, and it is the reaction chiefly that these letters disclose. We are reminded of the prophet whom Robertson himself selected as the type of "religious depression." Elijah upon Carmel stands with noble fearlessness before all Israel, and throws his own soul into the grand appeal—"If the Lord be God, then follow him." But when the sublime excitement of that hour was past, he flings himself wearily under the juniper-tree of the wilderness:—"It is enough, now Lord take my life." Yet was the prophet the same man on Carmel and in Beersheba. So we may read many a sermon of Robertson's until the heart is stirred as with the sound of a trumpet, while many a letter written about the same time sadly breathes the spirit of one of his own exclamations—"I wish I did not hate preaching so much!"

Good old Cæsar Malan had said to Robertson in the early days to which we have referred—"Mon très-cher frère, vous aurez une triste vie, et une triste ministère." The words were in one sense only too mournfully prophetic. Yet the sadness was not wholly that which the excellent Genevan pastor had anticipated—the alternation of uncertainty and hope with re-

spect to his personal acceptance with God. Robertson craved yet higher certainties, and was willing to surrender self for truth. In the spirit of his beloved Keble—

“I have made my choice;
I know not yet the promised bliss,
Know not if I shall win or miss;
So doubting, rather let me die,
Than close with aught beside, to last eternally.”

There is in the later letters a perceptible weariness of matters of opinion and doctrine. He falls back upon the grand spiritualities of religion, clings to his old beliefs; but, as he begins to mourn, originates nothing. He is sad and weary. “What I long for,” he writes in one letter, “is work that I can do in love, without meeting the rancour and the bitterness and the malignant slanders which I rouse on every side. It is a bitter thought that this is the only visible result of efforts that have been long wearying life.”

“The shadows of life,” he writes again, “have settled down. Yet is not this the common experience, for the first four-fifths of life at least ?

“‘Knowledge comes, but Wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast,
Full of sad experience, moving towards the stillness of his rest.’”

But we hasten to the close. Much that is deeply interesting in Mr. Robertson's teaching, in other directions, might have well claimed attention. His views on baptism, especially, were remarkable, and suggestive of many thoughts to Christians on every side of that many-sided controversy. We must, however, reluctantly forbear, and simply give the end of the life's story.

An obscure disease of the brain had for some time added to Robertson's depression. It became necessary that he should be relieved, in part at least, of his ministerial labours. The liberality of his friends at once enabled him to secure the services of a curate. His nomination was, however, disallowed by the Vicar of Brighton, from a personal pique, as it appears, against the gentleman selected by Mr. Robertson. Let us hope that the reverend incumbent did not know how bruised was the reed that he assisted to crush: that he had no conception of the greatness in the last eclipse of which he had so unworthily assisted, we may be quite sure. It was in vain for Robertson to struggle more. One letter to the vicar in relation to the matter bears date June 22, 1853. It is manly and noble, though quivering with a rightful indignation. On the 15th of August, the evening of the Lord's day, his spirit passed away.

“At his own chapel, in the morning, when the rumour went round that there was no hope, and God was besought to hear the prayer for him and

all sick persons, many wept bitterly, but the greater part of those who loved and venerated him were stunned beyond the power of weeping. That which they greatly feared had come upon them.

"The same night his spirit left them. He had passed through the day without intenser suffering than usual. He was moved from his bed to the sofa, near the open window, where he lay until the evening. But towards ten o'clock a change took place; the pain returned with bitter violence. Feebly crying at intervals, 'My God, my Father!—My God, my Father!' he lived for two hours in a mortal agony, during which he never lost clear consciousness. His mother, wife, and one friend, with his physician, watched over him with devoted care. At last they sought to relieve him by changing his position, but he could not endure a touch. 'I cannot bear it,' he said; 'let me rest, I must die. Let God do His work.' These were his last words. Immediately afterwards, at a few minutes past midnight, all was over."—Pp. 237-8, vol. ii.

On the 22nd of August, 1853, he was carried to the grave.

"The pavements and balconies were crowded with sorrowing spectators. The principal townsmen assumed mourning. Two thousand persons pressed into the quiet cemetery.

"There were united around his tomb, by a common sorrow and a common love, Jews, Unitarians, Roman Catholics, Quakers, and Churchmen; the working men, the tradesmen, and the rank and wealth of Brighton. For once—and it was a touching testimony to the reality of his work—all classes and all sects merged their differences in one deep feeling.

"They have raised above him a simple and massive monument. On two of its sides there are bronze medallions—one given by his congregation, the other by the working men of Brighton. They record in touching words the gratitude of thousands. A careful hand keeps, even in winter, flowers always blooming on his grave. They speak to many, who make their pilgrimage to the spot, of the fair immortality which is given to the faithful soldier of Jesus Christ."

G.

NURSERY NURTURE—No. III.

NURSERY NONSENSE.

"A time to laugh."

THERE is an apparent impropriety in discussing the topic of Nursery Nonsense directly after discoursing upon Family Prayer. Another arrangement in these notes might easily have been made, but then we should have lost one of those opportunities which are constantly occurring in our home life, of noticing and dwelling for a moment upon the subtle harmony which exists between its discordant engagements. The touch of nature in the sequence of Babies Crying, Family Prayer, and Nursery

Nonsense, will be felt at once by our readers, and will bring us nearer together.

Were we writing for any others, or were we careful about preserving our character for wisdom, it would have been policy to render the passage more easy, by interposing some subject which would serve to break the abruptness of the transition. Addressing ourselves, however, to those who are wise enough to be sometimes fools, and who will judge what we say, having understanding in all things relating to children, we are not careful about being misunderstood. Their ears will have been attuned, as well as our own, to the music of our course of home duties as they follow each other in their quick succession, endless variety, and different keys.

The step from the sublime to the ridiculous must often be taken by those who are leading divine and human lives. Those who are striving to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord will be taking it, advisedly, many times a day. They will have sympathized with us, we trust, in our effort to rear such an altar in our homes that our children can really worship God, and as we turn now and take this step, they will accompany us, without any of that fastidiousness which is found in some families in reference to fun.

No difficulty will be felt except by those who have adopted the heathen division of duties into sacred and secular, or who are labouring under the Jewish delusion that men or things, as God has made them, can be common or unclean. Accepting equally from God, His own Son, as He freely offers Him to us in the Gospel, and our own children as He places them in our arms, we shall find ourselves, easily and naturally, passing in a moment, from striving to please Him to striving to please them. There will be, doubtless, an appearance of incongruity in our conduct, to those who are strangers to Christianity, just as to many in the time of our Lord, and to some in our own day, the union of the divine and human natures in Christ was, and is a stumbling-block. Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ commends Himself to us, because we find Him to be man as well as God, and Christianity is, "without controversy," the religion for us, since it recognizes, without any respect of duties, our whole life. "Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we may do all to the glory of God."

We believe in what is called, now-a-days, the religion of common life, and that we may be continuously under divine direction, and that if we are so, we are led by the same spirit in the performance of all our engagements. Nothing that is necessary will appear to be out of place. Christianity can give that breadth to our life, which characterizes the picture of a master,

where the details are so treated, that instead of disturbing and lessening, they are found rather to increase the unity of the work.

The little Benjamin, as he sits on your knee when you read the Bible at Family Prayer, may be so handled, that he will not interfere with the spirit of the service, though he is looking around him with a comical quietness, first at one, and then at another member of the circle. He is amusing himself, but he is not amusing them. He will not hinder you, as you lead the devotions of the home, though you may feel his fairy fingers playing with your watch-chain. We have discovered that we may safely reward the urchin for his exemplary self-control, by a piece of quiet fun, which follows in our home immediately upon the family "Amen." A special "doddle" is reserved for these seasons, which by its quietness is evidently a source of exquisite enjoyment to the babe, and by the science and strength which it betrays, is as evidently the admiration and almost the envy of the bystanders. All this sounds simple and childish, but we are all very happy, and as most of us are children, we could not, perhaps, adopt a better way of expressing the old experience, that "Happy is that people whose God is the Lord."

Whatever may be the philosophy it is clearly the fact, that instead of there being any inconsistency between religion and amusement, they are closely connected. They are not only not antagonistic but even auxiliary. Holiness leads to humour. Our best men are our best wits. Those who have read our old divines, and who have numbered among their friends or relatives any who are thoroughly Christian, will understand what we mean.

The good, according to the old adage, are happy, and are ever ready for any good word or work; and thus it is, that they are to be seen taking a little child, or doing or saying something that will pass its time, or divert its attention from some trouble into which it has fallen.

Children are ticklish in their mind as well as their body. Like most young things, they are born with a disposition for play. Even a babe possesses the sense of the ridiculous, and responds at once to your touch, if you have wit enough to be able to tickle its fancy. These gifts are surely not intended to be left rusting in them unused. They must have been bestowed for some purpose, and what that may be, is presently discovered by us, if we have much to do with their management. Without going to any extremes, or suffering ourselves or others to abuse "this good creature of God," we may safely and thankfully receive it as a precious element in Nursery Nurture.

Good children are not always quiet, nor are we doing our best for our little ones by always "minding" them, and keeping them

still. They have to be left, at times, to themselves ; to be turned loose into the nursery, if the weather be foul, or into the fields if it be fair ; and we may thus do something to prevent them becoming heavy and prosy and matter-of-fact, and adding, as they grow up, to the decent dullness of the world.

There is to be, of course, a method in our madness, and the nature and limitations of opportunities are to be studied. Nursery nonsense will sometimes require to take the shape of frolic. Our merry-making must be an embodiment. The fun must be acted, and then we may be led, according to circumstances, in the direction of gambols, pranks, antics, romps, even as far, if we will, as high-jinks, only caring to keep ourselves and the whole of the noisy crew so well in hand, as to steer quite clear of any practical jokes. Buffoonery and tomfoolery will be found to be as unnecessary as they are vulgar. We may be droll and full to overflowing with all kinds of pleasantry without losing any of our own self-respect, or trenching in the least on the self-respect of one of the least of the little ones. There may be ridiculousness without ridicule, and we may laugh as much as we will with our children so long as we do not laugh at them.

When matters are serious, and a cry has to be prevented, or stopped, or turned into a smile, then our success will depend upon our words rather than our works. A child that has had a fall, or that has bit its tongue, or scratched its arm, is in no humour either for noise or motion. It needs to be quiet and to be cosseted. A little petting, under such circumstances, may be a good thing, but we shall have to recollect that with such handling, we shall be nursing the grievance as well as nursing the child. There is a more excellent way. Nothing can be done to divert the attention from the trouble, but something may be said, and a comic tale at such a time, will not only quickly heal the wound, but will serve as a stone in the foundation of the habit that we are wishing to form of forgetting grievances, which in such a world as ours, where offences must needs come, will be of no mean service.

A tale that is to give immediate relief to the patient, and which is to effect a perfect cure, must be nonsensical. It must possess, like all genuine nonsense, two apparently inconsistent characteristics. It must be so extraordinary as to arrest the attention at once and completely carry away the mind, and yet must refer to things which are familiar, and which already form a part of nursery experience and nursery literature. It had best be an old friend with a new face. Its power will lie in its grotesqueness, and there is nothing better, perhaps, to have in our mind's eye, as we improvise it, than a gargoyle, in which the artist, while giving the wildest play to his fancy, has yet preserved the form of the natural features.

Example is better than precept, and we select the following tale as one that answered the end for which it was told. Our little girl had to swallow a dose of medicine, and we promised her that if she drank it off at once we would tell her a story that would take the taste out of her mouth. We sat her on our knee, administered the draught and began as follows:—

“Once upon a time, a long while ago, two little birds lived in a nest in the country with their mother, and she used to give them a half-penny a week for pocket money. At first they used to spend their half-pennies in sweets, till their mother, who was poor, asked them to save up their pocket-money and buy two new bonnets. At the end of a year the two little birds had money enough, and went off to the town to buy their bonnets. When they got to the shop, the woman at the shop had plenty of bonnets, bonnets for horses, bonnets for cows, bonnets for pigs, and bonnets for dogs, but she was quite out of bonnets for birds. When the two little birds found that she had no bonnets for them, they looked very sad, and one of them was beginning to cry, when the woman said ‘don’t cry, go to London and buy them, any one can get anything in London.’

“So the little birds flew off to London, found the bonnet shop, and bought two beautiful bonnets. I can’t tell you how beautiful they were. Well, when the woman at the shop was fitting the bonnets on the birds she told them that the Queen had said that if ever any birds came to London to buy any bonnets she should be very glad to see them. So the woman called a cab, and the birds hopped in, and they went off to the Queen’s house. And as soon as the Queen heard that the birds in bonnets had come, she ran out and popped her head in at the cab window, and said ‘come in, come in!’ So they went in, and the Queen took them into a long room where there were two long tables. Then the Queen called to her servants, and they brought in sweets, and buns, and cakes, and cherries, and currants, and liquorice, and all sorts of good things, and the birds began to eat. One bird hopped up and down one table, picking and eating, and the other bird hopped up and down the other table, picking and eating. So when they had been picking and eating a very great deal, and I think their mother would say a very great deal too much, the Queen had two large sacks brought in, and the servants filled the sacks with what was left, that the birds might take it home to their mother.

“Then the Queen said to the little birds, ‘Now is there any thing else that you would like?’ So they looked at each other, and neither liked to say anything, till at last the bolder little bird (the little bird that did not cry), spoke up and said, ‘If you please, maam, we should like to have a ride in your coach.’

'Well,' said the Queen, 'and so you shall.' So she told all her men to fetch all her horses, and the men put all the horses into her coach, and brought it round to the door, and the birds hopped in, and then the Queen put her head in at the window and asked the little birds where they would like to go. The little birds did not say anything, one was sitting on one cushion, and one on the other, and they looked at each other, till at last the bolder bird spoke up, 'If you please, maam, when we have been in our nest at night, with our mother, we have often looked up at the moon, and wished to go there, and we knew that it was too far for us to fly, but we knew that the Queen's coach could go; we should like, if you please, to go to the moon.' Now this seemed to puzzle the Queen for a moment, but then in a minute she said, 'Oh, I can manage it, my horses cannot go, but a little while since I had a present made to me of the cow that jumped over the moon: my men shall take the horses out of the coach and put her in. So after all the men had taken all the horses out of the coach, they all went off to catch the cow. Oh, how the cow jumped and jumped! No one could catch her, till at last they got her into a field where there were some very high trees, and they caught her and brought her and put her in. 'Now,' says the Queen, 'you must be quick, the cow will stop for only a giffee, when she gets over the moon, and one of you must fly out of one window and the other fly out of the other window.' So off went the cow with the coach, just stopped for a giffee when she got over the moon, and one bird flew out of one window, and the other bird flew out of the other, and then alighting on the ground they began to walk about.

"Walking about, they came to a road, and at a little distance they saw something lying in the road, and hopping up to it to see what it was, they found it was a fiddle, and that out of one of the small holes in the fiddle there was a long black thing wagging too and fro. Now when they were looking at the fiddle, wondering what this black thing was, they heard a noise, 'Mee-aow, Mee-ee-aow, Mee-ee-ee-aow,' and there was the cat in the fiddle! But how the cat could have got into the fiddle, or how the cat would get out, the birds could not tell, for the holes were so small. Well, when the birds were standing by the fiddle, wondering about the cat, they heard somebody laughing as loud as he could. Now there was a low wall running alongside the road, and the birds looking over they saw a little dog laughing, and he had laughed so heartily that he had shaken off all the hair from his sides and tail, and there were just a few hairs left on the top of his head and the top of his back. Well, when they were looking at this little dog as he was laughing and shaking off all his hair, they heard some one coming as fast as he

could, and they turned to see who it was, but he had got so far away that they were obliged to fly after him, and then they saw that it was the dish that had run away with the spoon."

We have succeeded once and again, in mid-winter, when the children have been shut up the whole day in the nursery through the weather, in destroying the weariness and monotony by putting in a sudden appearance, and singing something which we have composed for the occasion. The stillness and gloom have been broken by a merry peal of laughter, which we have been happy enough to provoke by ringing some changes on one of our old rhymes.

The couple of dozen of blackbirds, whose heroism and loyalty have been sung for ages, have often furnished us with topics for speculation, and they are now become well-nigh historical characters in our homes. They have often been quoted as worthy and remarkable instances of patience and pluck, and we have turned, by the help of their example, a cry into singing. Others, like ourselves, will have had access to equally trustworthy records with ourselves, and will be in possession of special and original information, which, for the sake of the birds, to say nothing of children, ought to be published. There must be materials in existence, which, if they could be collected, would furnish something like a complete history of the lives and songs of these feathered heroes. We place, at the service of any who would undertake this labor of love, these two verses :—

These four-and-twenty black birds,
They went to see the Queen,
And she came out, and looked about,
And found them on the green.
And in and out, and round about,
They sat them in a ring ;
When she came out and looked about,
They all began to sing.

These four-and-twenty blackbirds
Were sitting in a tree,
And four-and-twenty pussy-cats,
Were looking up to see.
The four-and-twenty blackbirds
Were hunting after snails,
The four-and-twenty pussy-cats
Were wagging all their tails.

WESTHAMPTON CHURCH RECORDS.

IN SEARCH OF A PASTOR.

PART VI.

THERE are not many churches where such vagaries as those of Mr. Douglas would be likely to find less sympathy than in that at Westhampton. Its leaders were practical men, with clear and vigorous intellects, and not at all in danger of being captivated by the ingenious and subtle speculations in which he had indulged, while the people in general had at least been too carefully instructed in the doctrines of the Gospel to be carried away by a style of teaching, which, however specious and even brilliant, was deficient in the very points to which they attached a high value. Still there were a few who esteemed themselves rather more intellectual than their neighbours, who were unbounded in their expressions of admiration of a preacher so fearless and so powerful. He was just the "man" to influence the youthful mind of the place; so original, so broad, so free from traditional notions, so superior to the ordinary humdrum preachers who twaddle on for their weary hour without point and impression, so fresh and suggestive. The Church had now an opportunity which never had presented itself before, and which, if neglected, might not return, of securing a man able to develop her resources, and raise her to her right position in the town, and they only feared it would be lost through the incompetence, or something worse, of the Deacons. The objections which they heard urged they very summarily dismissed: their judgment doctrine was a very secondary matter; if they could get a man of real goodness and power, they would leave doctrine to take care of itself. Mr. Douglas was just such a man, and, however old-fashioned bigots might object to him, there could be no doubt that he would attract all the intelligence of the town, and would wield power over a class who had never been touched, even by such ministrations as those of Mr. Wilton.

The leader of this party was Mr. Wildbore, who, though his educational advantages had been but small, had by his intense enthusiasm in the search of knowledge, profited so largely by such opportunities as he had, that he had really attained a very honourable position, and would have had some weight, but for two fatal defects—his utter want of judgment, and his overweening intellectual conceit. His intellect was not without some acuteness, his memory was retentive, his information on a great variety of subjects was very extensive; but his mind was

not well balanced. He read voraciously, but his capacity for digestion was not equal to his appetite; and while he could bring out a great number of isolated facts, he lacked the power of seeing their relations to each other, or of using them for the discovery and elucidation of great principles. Hence, he became the easy victim of any theory, however extravagant, which could make a grand parade of scientific facts and principles on which it professed to be based—lacking, as he did, the extent of knowledge which would have enabled him to detect its mere empiricism and that robust good sense which often supplies its place, and which might have been equally effectual in discerning its fallacies. He had entered into so many schemes, each of which he had taken up with his characteristic ardour, and talked about as though it were the grand movement of the day, that he had become somewhat notorious in the town, and his adhesion to any fresh project was only received with a quiet laugh, as another outburst of his restless and fanatical love of novelty. His religious principles, as may be well understood, were not of the soundest. He was, indeed, conscientious to a fault; suffering the innumerable scruples which troubled his sensitive spirit, not only often to make him very disagreeable to others—an achievement by no means difficult, and unfortunately not very rare; but what is of far less frequent occurrence, often seriously to compromise his own interests. He was extremely benevolent; spending time, money, and talent very freely, in support of the many philanthropic schemes with which he was identified. In Temperance Societies, Peace Societies, Ragged Schools, Working Men's Clubs, and similar associations, he was an indefatigable worker; always having some one or other of these enterprises to which he devoted himself body and soul; although, unfortunately, he passed so frequently from one to another that his labours were not productive of the good they would otherwise have accomplished. But while there was a great deal of moral and social worth to command respect, his religious principles were so unsettled as to destroy all confidence in his judgment. He had been at all points of the theological compass, from the most extreme Calvinism to the merest Pelagianism, and had veered so rapidly from one to the other, that it was impossible at any moment to predict where he would be found or when found, whither his erratic spirit would carry him next. He was wont too, ever and anon, to indulge in little crotchets, which had often troubled good Mr. Wilton, and, but for wise management, might seriously have disturbed the peace of the church. At one time, he would not take the wine at the Lord's Supper, and was for having the church adopt some measures for consulting the fastidious consciences of himself and a few like-minded teetotalers. Latterly, he had been

less narrow; but his increased breadth had extended so far that he was now on the very verge of rationalism. In short, he was a wrong-headed man, and but for the substratum of real goodness, with which his many eccentricities did not interfere, would have been a dangerous character.

His friend and associate, Mr. Fairweather, was really more superficial, and at heart more mischievous, but outwardly much more plausible and attractive. He had begun his religious life with a great deal of ardour and apparent devotion, and having a pleasing address and great power of laying out his little intellectual capital to the best advantage, had obtained credit for much more power and knowledge than he actually possessed. Various circumstances had chilled his early spiritual feelings, and gradually he had become cold and critical, if not absolutely sceptical. The various works of Christian usefulness in which he once engaged with a peculiar earnestness, had, one by one, been abandoned; and though no one was more ready to condemn the apathy of others, or to complain of the general indifference of the church, he was the last to do anything towards remedying the evils which he was the first to censure. There were, however, certain circles in which he was still looked up to as an oracle. He was wont to talk very profoundly; and though his shallowness was speedily apparent to all well-cultured minds, he passed current with the ignorant or semi-educated as a wonderfully intellectual man. To him Douglas¹ was the very ideal of a preacher. He flattered his mental conceit; his sermons promised him a certain amount of excitement and stimulus, without imposing on him what was always unwelcome—any great effort of thought; he liked the *élan* and dash of his style, as well as the manifest latitude of his opinions; and finding that he was supported by his friend Wildbore, he determined upon an attempt to secure him as the pastor of Westhampton. These two men had a knot of admirers, chiefly young men, who compensated in some measure for their lack of numbers and of influence by an earnestness and activity which gave them a certain position in the church.

As they made no secret of their views and intentions, greatly to the disquietude of many of the graver and better members of the church, the deacons were fully aware of the state of feeling when they met to deliberate on the course which they ought to adopt under the grave and somewhat threatening aspect which the affairs of the church had assumed. At first, Mr. Rowntree and Mr. Ramsden were for urging strongly the claims of their respective favourites, but they soon found that they met with so little sympathy, and the want of unanimity amongst the deacons so clearly foreshadowed the result of any proposition that might

be made to the church on behalf of either of them, that like sensible men they yielded to the force of circumstances, and ceased to urge their own particular views. This was the time when the value of such a counsellor as Mr. Percy was felt. A more unwise or more selfish leader might have taken the opportunity of reminding his colleagues that had his advice been followed their present difficulty would have been escaped; but he knew that the only effect of such remarks would be to irritate those whom he rather sought to unite in counsels for common good. "We have," he said, "committed an error; but, without looking to the past, we must be prepared now to face the little troubles of the present. Our real difficulty will be with Mr. Douglas and his friends. I suppose we are all agreed that he is not the man to be our pastor. That he has a vigorous intellect, and that his sermons are not of a common order, I willingly admit; but, in my judgment, they lack that solidity, that logical force, and that scriptural doctrine, for which no brilliancy can be an adequate compensation. It is, perhaps, too much to form a decided opinion from two sermons, but the qualities which they revealed, and still more those which his conversation discovered, make me extremely apprehensive as to the probable effect of his ministry upon a congregation like ours. Still, the fact is not to be concealed that there are many who hold a very different opinion, and that they will not easily be induced to abandon their notions. It is necessary, therefore, that we deal cautiously in this matter; and my own advice is, that we should recommend the church, without discussing the merits of the different candidates, at once to authorise the deacons to take some fresh steps for the purpose of obtaining a pastor. If we can succeed in securing the adoption of this plan, we shall very happily get free from an unpleasant and threatening complication. For the future, I hope, we shall resolve not to bring any man before the church as a candidate until we ourselves are satisfied that he possesses the requisite qualifications for our pastorate." These views were so reasonable that there was not a murmur of opposition, and Mr. Wright gave them additional force by the frankness with which he expressed his regret that he had been led to urge on a course in defiance of Mr. Percy's superior judgment, which, though it seemed right and fair enough at first, he could now see was fraught with great risk to the unity of the church.

But a false step is proverbially difficult to retrace, and unanimous as the deacons were among themselves, the task before them in the church was not quite so easy. On the evening appointed for the meeting, there was a large attendance of the members whose attention had been excited by the inevitable discussions which had taken place in every little tea-party and

other gathering among the congregation, relative to the merits of the three gentlemen whom they regarded as the candidates for their suffrages. Of course there had been not a little nonsense talked, but those who were disposed to rail at this shopkeeping class, which they supposed constitutes the majority of dissenting churches, often in terms not very fitting we should have thought for tongues so polite, would have been somewhat surprised to find the amount of shrewd sense that marked many of their observations. Messrs. Fenton and Coulter did not find many admirers except in a small and bigoted circle. The friends of Mr. Douglas were perhaps not much more numerous, but certainly more active and determined. All parties, however, mustered in full force at the meeting, which it was generally expected would not be of the most pleasant character. It fell to Mr. Ramsden's lot to occupy the chair, and though he had not much power of speech, he introduced the proceedings with a few plain and practical remarks, in which he detailed the proceedings of the deacons, and indicated the course which they recommended the church to pursue. An awkward pause followed his speech, each one apparently waiting for some one else to break the ice. At last Mr. Selby, who had been well tutored, both by his wife and Miss Farmer, rose, and in a somewhat blundering and consequential style, took the deacons to task for a want of practical wisdom in their conduct. He felt sure that it would have been possible with anything like right management, for the church to have been settled months ago. As to the gentlemen whom they had recently heard, Mr. Fenton was thoroughly respectable, and had a gentlemanly air which commended itself very much to his taste; but though he himself could be quite content with his preaching, he hardly thought it was sufficiently intellectual or quite suited to the character of the times, or of a church containing so many intelligent men. As to Mr. Coulter, he was altogether too sensational and vulgar for him, while Mr. Douglas was so wild in his preaching, that though he listened carefully he found it impossible to determine what he believed, or whether he believed anything at all. He quite agreed that there was no other course now open but to begin at the beginning again, but he hesitated as to reposing any confidence in the deacons; and he must say, that if something was not done soon, he should himself propose to the church to introduce some new blood into the vestry. This idea of "new blood," is a favourite one with this class of men wherever you find them, and Mr. Selby looked on it as the great hit of his speech. Both the chairman and Mr. Rowntree were excessively restive and impatient under his strictures. They had not sufficient wisdom to see that though every community must have its executive, that executive is

always sure to be open to criticisms, sometimes not very fair, if things do not go quite straight. They, however, had so much self-restraint as led them to hold their peace. The chairman, indeed, looked towards Mr. Percy, as if expecting him to undertake the defence of his brethren, but finding no encouragement, he wisely suffered the discussion to take its own course.

Mr. Fairweather was the next to rise. "I do not wish," he said to be understood as having any sympathy in the censure of the deacons, which has been expressed by the last speaker. They appear to me to have done their best to secure an efficient pastor, and I think the Church is indebted to them for the care which they have given to the arduous and somewhat thankless duties of their office. At the same time, I cannot agree in the conclusion which they have reached; for it seems to me, that if we cannot at once agree to invite one of the gentlemen whom we have just heard, we may, at all events, give him the benefit of a second hearing. That a church, so intelligent, and well-trained as ours" (this notion of their superior intelligence was of course assumed by all), "accustomed to a ministry like that of Mr. Wilton, could ever be satisfied with the tame platitudes of Mr. Fenton, or the mere pious rant of Mr. Coulter, is not for a moment to be supposed; but Mr. Douglas is a very different man. I can quite understand how he has shocked the prejudices of some who are hardly familiar with the progress of thought in these times, and I am not prepared to justify some of his expressions myself; but I like his freedom, his strength, his independence. We must remember that we have in this town a number of intelligent and inquiring young men, few of whom are to be found in connection with our churches, mainly, as I think, because there is no preaching adapted to their wants. A man in real sympathy with the intellectual movements of the day would, I am satisfied, win many of them; and in my opinion, Mr. Douglas is one of this character. He is not bound by the articles of a dead creed, nor is he confined within a narrow range of stereotyped phraseology. His intellect is of a high order, and if those who are opposed to him would only be content to hold their prejudices in abeyance, I cannot doubt that in a short time they would discover in him a power and an excellence amply sufficient to atone for the little peculiarities to which they may take exception. I have therefore to propose that the deacons be instructed to invite Mr. Douglas to pay us a second and longer visit at the earliest possible opportunity."

Mr. Wildbore, of course, seconded the proposition of his friend, but was much more curt and unpleasant in the mode of his advocacy. He had the quality, ascribed to one of our leading statesmen, of saying the most disagreeable things in the most

disagreeable way, and he let it have full play. He did not mean to offend; but owing to the absence of any delicate feeling in himself, he introduced an element of bitterness that ought to have been carefully kept out. He talked as though all opposed to him, and to what he called "advanced views," were deficient in intellect and ignorant of science, and might have provoked an angry reply, had not those whom he assailed regarded his censures with the indifference they deserved.

We shall not attempt to follow the course of the debate which arose, and in which some strong statements were made on both sides. The deacons very wisely maintained their peace, and the speech which really determined the action of the church was that of Mr. Robson, who had been induced for once to come to the meeting. "I do not," he said, "as the Church well knows, often take part in such discussions as this, but I cannot allow some of the statements which have been made this evening to pass without notice. Let me say, at first, that the only point in which I consider the deacons are blameworthy, is in placing before us three different candidates at once; and they have done the best to repair this, by the sensible proposition which they have submitted to-night, and which I most heartily support. I regret that we have not been able to agree to this resolution without discussion, and that the friends of Mr. Douglas have thought it necessary to support his claims with so much pertinacity, and with so much injustice to those who differ from them. The quiet assumption, that all the intellect of the Church is in favour of the theological system, or rather of that want of any definite theological system of which Mr. Douglas is an exponent, I will not designate as it deserves; but I cannot forbear from entering my protest against the extreme narrowness of those who, while talking about breadth of view, plainly indicate their contempt for all who adhere to what they would call the stereotyped theology of the past. I am so thoroughly familiar with all their phrases, that they do not at all disturb me, but I am not prepared to accept the notion which seems to be implied in their assertions, that they have a monopoly of independent thought and liberal feeling. I can join them heartily in their denunciation of dead creeds; but to me it appears that some of the school, and I must include Mr. Douglas in the number, would fain have no creed at all. The day for a hard scholastic theology, for rigid definitions, and above all, for charges of heresy against all who cannot subscribe to the minutiae of a human theology is past, but we must beware lest we rush into a contrary extreme. Let us by all means have liberty; but let not that liberty become the cloak for a style of teaching which would undermine the very foundations of our

faith. As to Mr. Douglas attracting young men, I fear that those he would gain would not be of any great value, and I doubt whether his influence upon them would be good. A few flippant, superficial youths, who have picked up the smattering of a great many things without accurate knowledge of any, and who, in virtue of the very miscellaneous and undigested information which they have acquired, fancy themselves extremely intellectual, would doubtless be captivated by such preaching as his; but its effect upon them would be of the worst character, feeding their intellectual conceit, and encouraging that rebellion against all authority and that thirst for mere novelties, regardless of their truth already too strongly developed. I will not further enter into the question now. I hope soon to see a minister who shall combine a sympathy with progress of every character, with a becoming respect for the great men and great works of the past, who shall be neither ignorant nor narrow, who shall manifest the truest charity and the widest tolerance; but who shall not think it necessary to treat lightly the doctrines which, I believe, form the very essence of our Christianity; or to outrage the feelings of those who are as conscientious, as earnest, and as good as himself, though their opinions may have been formed under other influences, and their creed may be of a different type from his own."

Mr. Robson had struck the right chord, and he carried the church with him in his views. Mr. Fairweather sneered in private at his old-fogeyism, and Mr. Wildbore imputed his conduct to the conservatism natural to lawyers, whom he pronounced to be a very unnecessary class, and, in fact, an intolerable nuisance. But they felt not the less that they were in the grasp of a man stronger than themselves; and as some even of their own sympathizers had been affected by Mr. Robson's arguments, they deemed it wiser to hold their peace. Thus, the unity and peace of the church were preserved, and the little soreness of feeling which had been produced by the temporary collision of opinion, soon passed away. Where there are sensible leaders Congregational churches do not often fall into the mistakes which their enemies suppose to be so common among them. Had some patron possessed the power of disposing of their pulpit, the people of Westhampton might have been handed over to the platitudes of Mr. Fenton, who would soon have produced a state of universal somnolence; or to the sensationalism of Mr. Coulter, who would have disgusted all the more quiet and thoughtful people; or to the latitudinarianism of Mr. Douglas, who would have played in his parish some such part as that of Bishop Colenso in his diocese. Theirs would, indeed, have been a rare good fortune if they had secured a pastor of a superior order. As it was, they had been able, at least

by the exercise of their own sagacity, to steer clear of those evils, and had before them the hope of finding a minister more equal to the responsibilities and duties of the position. Of course there was some delay, and a few things had occurred which all would regret; of course, too, it was open to enemies to sneer at the idea of the taught choosing their own teacher, and the like; but they had all the blessings of liberty, and had no right to complain if they had to accept its little disadvantages and difficulties also. Nay, in ecclesiastical as in civil affairs, these slight troubles serve as the discipline by which freemen are educated in that spirit of self-reliance essential to the proper exercise of the functions belonging to them.

Happily, the Westhampton Church was not much longer in reaping the reward of its own patience and forbearance. In the course of his summer excursion, which followed soon after the church meeting above described, Mr. Percy was thrown into frequent contact with a Mr. Sinclair, a young minister, who strongly impressed him, both by the manifest devoutness of his spirit, and his intellectual freshness and vigour. The more he conversed with him, the more strongly was he convinced that he possessed in a high degree the qualifications which he had been hoping to find in his future pastor; but before even mentioning the subject to him, he took care to spend a Sunday in the little country town of Willington, where he ministered. The sermons which he heard satisfied him that his impressions were correct. They were vigorous in thought, rich in illustration, and powerful in appeal. There was nothing conventional or formal either in matter or manner. Mr. Sinclair spoke with that freedom and force characteristic of those who have worked out their own conviction. Mr. Douglas himself could not have been more perfectly independent or more fearless in his indifference to the requirements of any school, or in his defiance of vulgar prejudice; but there was a reverential tone, accompanied with an earnest love of the truth itself, which marked him out as a man of a very different stamp. Having happily enjoyed the advantages of the highest form of culture, he could not be content to adopt mere traditional opinions, while his acquaintance with different modes of thought had given a many-sidedness to his character and a charity to his judgments of men. Sometimes unenlightened bigots, hearing him for the first time, and not discovering in his sermons the frequent introduction of forms of speech to which they were accustomed, and perhaps being startled with statements which were to them unusual and extreme, fancied and said that he was not evangelical. But such an idea could not for a moment be maintained by any candid man, however he might dissent from some of his opinions, who had a fair acquaintance with his ministry. Of the results of that

ministry Mr. Percy had abundant evidence. The chapel, which, prior to his coming three years before, had been well-nigh deserted, was now filled with an attentive and evidently interested auditory, and from the inquiries which he made, both amongst the members of his own congregation and others outside, learnt the deep impression which he had produced in the town in general. His only difficulty was as to the propriety of seeking to attract him from a sphere in which he was so useful; but this scruple was removed by the feeling that further extension in such a town as Willington was impossible, and that powers like those of Mr. Sinclair's should have a more ample field for their exercise.

We will not here attempt to detail the steps which, having once arrived at the conviction that Mr. Sinclair was the man for Westhampton, Mr. Percy adopted, in order to carry his views for it into effect; of the difficulties interposed by the gentleman himself, and of the earnest remonstrances of the Willington church against his proposed removal. Suffice it to say, that the intense and all but universal enthusiasm which, from his first visit, he awakened at Westhampton, availed to carry all before it. At first, indeed, some of the older people were disposed to question his orthodoxy, but such doubts, never very strong or definite, were easily removed. The only strong objector was Mr. Ramsden, who did not like the notion of his minister being, as Mr. Sinclair was an active member of the Liberation Society; but Mr. Percy succeeded in convincing him that such an objection would be fatal to the best of the younger ministry, most of whom, with the exception of a few in the suburban churches of the metropolis, where the atmosphere is singularly deficient in bracing qualities, feel the importance of decided and aggressive action on behalf of Nonconformist principles. The true spiritual earnestness of Mr. Sinclair also had impressed him so strongly, that he could not refuse to concur in the general voice of the church. Thus it happened that, after its somewhat lengthened period of probation, the Westhampton church found itself once more happily settled under a pastor the soundness of whose faith, the sincerity of whose piety, and the true charity of whose spirit fitted him to be eminently useful, and gave the happiest promise of future success. Some incidents in the ministry thus commenced may form subjects for appropriate papers for the *Christian Spectator*.

OFF TO NORWAY

CHAPTER V.

A NEW ACQUAINTANCE—CROSSING THE DOVRE—SNEHÆTTEN—
SOMETHING LIKE A DRIVE—NY-OVEN—TEA AND PTARMIGAN.

THE prospect for the day's drive, as I stood next morning at the door of Tofte's house, at six o'clock, was anything but pleasant; for the rain came down heavily, and the roaring wind was telling of mountain changes. The horses were to be ready by six, and the Pige had promised to get us coffee before starting. But the Norwegians do not write "Tempus fugit" on their clocks, as we do; and one had to exercise the virtue which, in the blessed days before steamers smoked in Indian seas, was said to be acquired by a voyage to Calcutta. But the law of compensation is always working for us, and I subsequently had reason to be glad of the delay; for while waiting a four-wheel drove up to the station, which a *tolk* (an interpreter and a sort of dragoman) was taking up into the Romsdal for Lord and Lady Coventry, whom he was to meet there on their return journey. Two men jumped down characteristically; one a broad-beamed, heavy, smooth-faced, German "commercial;" the other every whit an Englishman. To the latter I was indebted throughout the day for valuable assistance in a part of the journey, which without him might have been full of disagreeables. For some time he had spent the chief portion of every year in the country, and spoke the language fluently, and knew every inch of the road perfectly. I found he was known at the different "stations," and as the people called him "the Consul," I shall, in ignorance of his name—though not sure of their correctness—follow their example.

The stage to Dombaas (double *a* is pronounced like our *oa*, as in boat), only seven English miles, would take us, we learned, two hours to accomplish; partly because of the ascent, which, however, was not considerable; but chiefly because of the heaviness of the road, being for the most part sand. On the distant mountain tops before us there was newly-fallen snow, for what had been rain with us was snow there. Dombaas is 1200 feet above the level of the sea; and from that station the ascent of the Dovre really begins, although we had for some time been gradually ascending. The road became steep at once on leaving Dombaas, and with my English experience of driving, I mentally prepared for some stiff walking; but the *skydskarl*, a big hulking fellow, jumped up behind a carriage without compunction, and never once relieved the horse of his weight the whole way. But the

horses were unusually good, and took their work well. The stage to Fokstuen, the next station, and on the Fjeld, was about six English miles, and takes two hours to accomplish, while one hour is sufficient for returning. At first I found the air only bracing and exhilarating, but the higher we got, the more did I wish for warmer clothing. And before very long the wind was bitterly cold. Not a house of any kind was to be seen. All was bare and barren, except as relieved by reindeer moss and mountain herbage. In the winter, I am told, vast herds of reindeer are found here. Fokstuen presents a dreary appearance; and as it was both windy and wet, and there was nothing to invite delay, and we had to drive about fourteen miles, still ascending, before we should see another human habitation, and should still have some steep work to do after that, we were eager to push on. Carriole travelling is not intended for the cultivation of the social. There were four of us, each in his own vehicle; and so we had to proceed in Indian file, with our thoughts for company. The wind was piercingly cold, and as I had nothing but a macintosh cape to wrap round me, which the wind seemed bent on depriving me of, memory was busy among the coats and cloaks of former days. A blanket, or an old sack even, would have been esteemed a god-send. And so fourteen tedious miles had to be got over, all as wild and dreary as anything can be imagined. By-and-by we came to a mountain-lake, broad, but apparently shallow, which the fierce wind was lashing up into very considerable waves. At the very bleakest spot of the whole stage the skyds-karl called a halt, as he is legally entitled to do, to rest the horses; and I found we had to stand stock-still for half-an-hour. I tried to get a little warmth by exercise, but had to bow my head to the fierce wind too much to allow of much exercise, and so, in about ten minutes, finding this halt at such a point intolerable, jumped up and drove off, leaving the skyds-karl to please himself. The others followed the example, and the karl seated himself, too. Here, ever ascending, and the cold increasing, I learnt the truth of one of my schoolboy lessons, viz., that no two atoms really touch each other; and I came to the conclusion that if the Prince of Denmark (Shakspeare's Prince, I mean) had been with me on the Dovre Fjeld that day, he would never have dreamed of saying, "this too solid flesh." Why I found myself perfectly porous, and the wind whistled through me as through the branches of a tree in winter! And scanty and uncared-for food had caused additional discomfort: and so altogether I am afraid I became insensible to Solomon's eulogy of "the good man," for I made my "beast" put his best leg foremost, I can tell you; and having nothing but the superfluously-long dried-skin rein to urge him with, found the exercise wearisome

indeed, but favourable to the circulation. We passed not a hut, nor a tree, nor a single human being, for all those fourteen miles, and were glad when at last we caught sight of the last station in the ascent. But nothing can be conceived more dreary than the aspect of Hjærkin (j pronounced as y) as it is first seen. A range of wooden buildings on a bleak mountain-side, with not another habitation to be seen anywhere, and barrenness all around—we had long passed the limits of the fir, and then of the birch. It was a long and stiff pull up to the station, and, coming at the end of a stage of nearly fourteen miles, it rather tried the horses, and glad enough we all were to find ourselves at last within the quadrangle of wooden buildings which composed the station. Here the Consul proposed we should rest for a couple of hours, and dine at our leisure; as, in order to stay for the night at the most eligible station, we should still have some six hours' driving in the rain. Nothing could exceed the courtesy and attention of the hostess, who we found had not long been married, and had come from Throndhjem to live in this bleak and solitary mountain home. But she was cheerful and had no regrets. Jerkin (as it is spelt in English books) is rather a favourite station, and sportsmen and others often stay here for three or four weeks, or more. It is the point from which those who are minded to climb Snehætten proceed; as they can here obtain horses and guides. My companion and I, a few days before, while suffering from the almost tropical heat of the valley of the Logen, had made up our minds to ascend this most famous of the mountains constituting the ridge of the Dovre. How welcome in hot summer is the idea of snow. But now that we were here, and consulted the people of the place, we were easily persuaded into the more comfortable belief that there was no adequate recompense to be expected for the great fatigue we should have to undergo. The excursion would not only take some twelve hours, but, as there was an immense quantity of newly-fallen snow, the difficulties, they urged, would be too great to be encountered without some adequate object in view. Merely to be able to say we had ascended Snehætten, I felt would be a very poor thing, and I had no scientific object to serve. The pleasure of the adventure, and the gratification of the love of wild scenery, were the chief temptations, and these indeed had great force. But I was cold through, and as this particular mountain was but a little higher than the summit of the one which our road lay over, and we were surrounded by many snow-covered mountains as like Snehætten as could be, I allowed the advice of the Consul and everybody at the station, seconded, it must be confessed, by certain self-indulgent pleadings, to prevail, and so fell back upon the "sour-grapes" philosophy; which, in spite of its ill-repute ever since Æsop's days,

might have something urged in its favour, one thinks. At all events it is natural, and I know some one who has more than once found it rather inwardly sustaining and helpful. Well, then, what was Snehætten, that one should encounter so much fatigue and incur some considerable risk, for the sake of standing on its summit? I approved of the "Abana-and-Pharphar" principle, and turned away.

The rain was falling, and the wind was piercingly cold, as, at three o'clock, we quitted the comfortable room, where we had enjoyed a two-hours' rest and a very creditable dinner, to continue our journey. The ascent from Jerkin to the summit is still nearly a couple of English miles, and is for the most part very steep. Soon after leaving the station we were compelled to halt to rest the horses. Indeed it was so steep that many of our English horses would refuse it, or, if they faced it, would very probably find themselves helplessly sliding down, backwards; and to stand still they certainly would have found too much for them. However, we were soon at the top, and halted to survey the scene presented. It certainly was really very impressive. Mountains all around us, and stretching far away in the distance on every side, their snowy summits mixing and confounded with the snowy clouds that rolled in and out among and over them. Snehætten looked not more than a mile or two off: but nothing is more deceptive than distances among mountains.

A circular heap of stones by the road side marked the highest point of the Dovre Fjeld, and then we began to descend. For the most part the descent is by a series of declivities more or less steep; and as we had here the best horses of the whole journey, we went down with a rapidity that was very exhilarating. The Consul had the very best horse, without exception, that I saw in all Norway, and, though mine was excellent, he left me behind, and then halted for me once or twice. Presently, however, on my coming up, he said he "was sure it would be a real treat to me to drive such a horse as his, full of fire, and which had been trying to run away with him two or three times;" and he so courteously and firmly insisted on changing with me, that, remembering Louis the Fourteenth's tribute to the politeness of the Earl of Stair (who, on his Majesty's intimating a wish that the English nobleman should precede him in entering the carriage, did so without any hesitation), I easily allowed his courtesy to have its way, and took his comfortable carriage instead of my own. The horse was impatient at the delay. The wind was tossing his mane, and he presented just the appearance of a high-bred, but wild and tameless creature, that painters sometimes depict from imagination. We

had still three-fourths of the descent to do ; and, having a fearless faith in the noble animal, instead of caring to hold him in, I soon gave him rein, *laxas habenas*, and even urged him on, and away we went, tearing down at a pace to take one's breath almost. It was like flying on the wings of the wind, and did me a world of good. It woke up a full half of one's soul—made one feel akin to the elements, and yet almost their master. Verily, we poor thralls of the most comfort-loving age the world has seen,—the slaves of a petty tyranny of small conventional propriety and mechanical routine from which life is almost banished,—need to make our escape now and then—not from, but to—the windy storm and tempest. In the absence of those legitimate excitements of dormant feeling and power which are really provided for us, we often naturally but blindly seek to supply the inward and misinterpreted craving for “more life and fuller,” by means that make us—not more, but less—not mightier, but feebler. How seldom, as it seems, does a man appear to have found out what it is to be a MAN ! Let us thank God, then, for all that tends to reveal us to ourselves ; and if the stimulants provided by nature are glorious, what must be those higher and nobler ones which make us “partakers of the divine nature ?” Goethe speaks somewhere of the daimonic element in man, and illustrates by the sort of consciousness which some men seem to have of lordship over nature. Cæsar, for instance, when, on a tempestuous sea, by night, embarked in an open boat, and the boatman was afraid and wished to return, but was re-assured by the strong word of the Roman, “You carry Cæsar and his fortunes.” Truly, man was originally made to be—and, perhaps, ultimately shall be, under God—Lord of all below ! At all events, there are moments when he gets a glimpse of the idea, and that through consciousness. But whither has my winged horse borne me ? I must assuredly use the rein for myself, though I did not for him. For am I not writing as a “Christian Spectator ?” and do not many most respectable and well-to-do Christian people expect such a one to be extraordinarily staid, and decorous, and — goody ? Truly ; and yet this periodical has in vain taxed the brain and heart of many a good man and true for fifteen years, if THE “*Christian Spectator*” is not expected to have full sympathy with all that is true. So then we will thank God for horses, and eagles, and mountain-steeps, and snowstorms, as well as for carpet-slippers and prayer-meetings. And we will wish that the intellectual and the moral may be well and wisely stimulated in all of us, so that the lower, but legitimate and healthful, excitements which God has provided for us may have their parallel in the higher plane of our religious consciousness. If we now and then feel how grand

a thing it is to be a man, may we sometimes, at all events, feel how unutterably heroic and sublime a thing it is to be a Christian. There are adventures and exploits for the soul, and heights for it to gain. And if the joy of conquest be the proper joy of man, may we never refuse the fields on which the higher joys of conquest are to be won.

Now I throw myself on my readers' indulgence for all this "rhapsody," as one of my friends is sure to call it, and can only further suggest that as this train of thought was born of that mountain drive, it may perhaps be allowed to belong to the narrative.

As we began to reach the lower levels, we found ourselves in a deep and gloomy gorge of the mountains, with a rapid new-born mountain-river foaming and dashing along beside or below our narrow path. Steep rocks rose up like walls, and the summits of the mountains, on either hand, were lost in the vaporous sky; huge, bare, with snow above, and patches of snow here and there lower down; and from the snow innumerable streams, some indeed, but silver rills, others bold waterfalls, cascades, leaping from ledge to ledge, and finally swelling the roaring river at the base, which for a large portion of its earlier course makes its rapid way by a succession of falls. For some distance the scenery might almost be described as, not merely wild, but savage. But now we had vegetation again, scanty firs and birch, while soon the grass bordered our path, and flowers once more gladdened us. Beautiful specimens of saxifrage especially compelled our notice.

The first station, however, that we reached—Kongsvold—is over 3000 feet above the sea level, so that the river—the Driv—which flows northward, as the Logen had flowed south—had yet many a fall to make. Some of these were so well worth seeing, even in this land of the mountain and the flood, that in spite of cold and wet—for the rain kept on all the evening—we got out of our carriages and clambered along to the edge that we might look down on the raging torrent, wildly, madly forcing its way through the imprisoning rocks.

As we proceeded from station to station, Kongsvold, Drivstuen Rise, the scenery became diversified, and at times we had the beautiful with, or in exchange for, the grand. I can easily conceive that if we had had sunshine instead of rain, I should have found in some parts the colours charming; for the rocks, even through the cold rain, spoke of rich browns and reds, while the ferns, and mosses, and flowers, as well as trees, were abundant. Occasionally the ground widened, and gave us an ample greensward, with beautiful groups of birches, that made it easy to fancy we were surely passing through the grounds of some

gentleman whose hereditary mansion would soon be seen in the midst of a beautiful park. But then all was changed again, and we were reminded that Norway is not the country for parks or gentlemen's estates, but the not too-propitious home of a hardy race to whom the English notion of a gentleman is altogether strange. In the very few towns—and there is not one between Christiania and Thronhjelm, a distance of 400 miles—there are tradesmen, and a few military; but in the country, besides the priest, there are none but peasant-farmers and labourers.

Evening closed on us as the glens and gorges gave way to somewhat more open country, with the mountains a little receded; and with the decline of day the rain came on heavier than before. It was miserable work, changing horses and carriages at the wet and—under the circumstances—miserable-looking stations. But about nine o'clock we reached Ny-Ovne, where the Consul had proposed for us to stay the night. It was Saturday, and though he would be pushing on next day, I had determined to keep the day of rest there. The station looked very comfortable, and was, although at first it was a question how we were all to be lodged; for there were other travellers there before us. However, that was settled; and as soon as we had examined our knapsacks, which we had had no means of guarding from the rain, and had made ourselves a little decent, we found ourselves comfortably seated at a most welcome tea-table, amply supplied. The Consul had undertaken to give orders, and as he carried a supply of English tea with him, we had a most enjoyable meal; white bread and butter, lobster, eggs, and admirably-cooked ptarmigan, one a-piece, smoking hot, with properly-made tea (for he had made it himself) and cream, *ad libitum*. We had been travelling for fourteen hours, had driven somewhat over sixty miles, and the crossing of the Dovre had been anything but a summer-day's drive; but now all was forgotten, and we did not know how enough to enjoy the comfort of shelter and the good English tea. The Pige was delighted at our enjoyment of the meal, and at our praises of her cookery; for the ptarmigan was done to perfection, and served up deliciously. Indeed, all the Norwegians make capital cooks. The reader will see I dwell on these little details by way of make-weight for "the rhapsody" (as I am sure a certain friend will call it) I have indulged in a little before. And now, as the long, long tea is over, and the next blessing weary nature seeks its repose, let me say—

"To each and all a fair good night,
And rosy dreams, and slumbers bright."

THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

BY ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

I SAY to thee—do thou repeat
To the first man thou mayest meet,
In lane, highway, or open street—

That he, and we, and all men move
Under a canopy of Love,
As broad as the blue sky above ;

That doubt and trouble, fear and pain,
And anguish, all are shadows vain ;
That death itself shall not remain ;

That weary deserts we may tread,
A dreary labyrinth we may thread,
Through dark ways underground be led ;

Yet if we will our Guide obey,
The dreariest path, the darkest way,
Shall issue out in heavenly day.

And we, on divers shores now cast,
Shall meet, our perilous voyage past,
All in our Father's house at last.

And ere thou leave him, say thou this,
Yet one word more ; they only miss
The winning of that final bliss—

Who will not count it true that Love,
Blessing, not cursing, rules above,
And that in it we live and move.

And one thing further make him know,
That to believe these things are so,
This firm faith never to forego,—

Despite of all which seems at strife
With blessing, all with curses rife,
That this *is* blessing, this *is* life.

BRIEF NOTICES OF BOOKS.

The Redeemer. Discourses by EDMOND DE PRESSENSE, D.D.
With Introduction by W. LINDSAY ALEXANDER, D.D. Edinburgh:
T. & T. Clark.

It takes men of every race under heaven to present adequately the full idea of man; and it takes believers of every temperament and of every nation, and of every Church, to give the true idea of a Christian. Neither "they without us," nor we without them are "perfect;" and thus—not now to speak of other things—the importance of intimate acquaintance with one another's religious literature can scarcely be exaggerated. The English "Evangelical" would be benefited more than we could make him believe by a frank, unjealous, unsuspecting study of the broad, free, and painstaking works of our German brethren; while we are sure that, though we have not much to teach them in their own peculiar department, they too would derive as much benefit from our best religious literature.

The volume before us is the production of one of the most thoughtful and most accomplished of the ministers of the French Protestant Church. A man of broad culture, he is at the same time loyally devoted to the cause of evangelical truth. Only the English reader, who is apt to construe the term sometimes too narrowly and crudely, may need to be informed that genuine evangelicalism refuses to be stretched on any Procrustean bed, and that the living face, with its infinite variety of play, is beyond all comparison with a dead cast, even though the material were of costliest marble or finest gold.

We give M. de Pressensé a hearty welcome among us, cordially thanking the Messrs. Clark for enabling the English reader to make the acquaintance of the learned and devout and earnest Frenchman, whose discourses on the Redeemer we cordially commend.

The Argument à Priori for the Moral Attributes of God. By W. H. GILLESPIE, Author of "The Necessary Existence of God." Edinburgh: Nimmo. 1865.

IN these days of alight thinking and hasty writing it is refreshing to get hold of a book which the author has thought out sentence by sentence, choosing to adopt, for the sake of satisfying himself and convincing his readers, the strictly scientific method for setting forth and establishing his position. Few men in our day would be found more competent than Mr. Gillespie to take the high *à priori* road; but he is at home and luxuriates in it as a bird in the air or fish in the water. And although his book is not written for the purpose of indirectly promoting any particular theological tenet, some of our readers may be interested in learning that the author believes himself to establish, by strictest *à priori* reasoning, that JUSTICE

of itself does not demand the eternal preservation of sinners with a view to an eternity of misery. We heartily thank Mr. Gillespie for his tractate, and commend it to the thoughtful regard of our readers.

A Campaigner at Home. By "SHIRLEY." London: Longman & Co.

"SHIRLEY" is the *nom de plume* of a writer in *Fraser*, who has here republished, in a small volume fourteen essays that appeared in that magazine; and almost every reader will agree that he has done well in thus giving them a separate existence. We say "almost" merely in a bit of hyper-conscientiousness, and having proper regard to the fact that there may be still lingering among us some of the "unco guid," who devoutly believe that the whole field of human nature is not to be cultivated, and that man has faculties whose exercise religion frowns upon. But for ourselves, believing that only vice and wickedness are to be proscribed, with what may lead to them, we are free to welcome wit and humour and the gleamful play of satire; with Milton turning at times from Paradise itself to invite "heart-easing mirth" and

"Laughter holding both his sides."

This volume of Mr. Skelton's is as genial as one could desire. Full of happy thoughts and pleasant fancies, and sportive humour, yet not without a grave and earnest purpose, every page is redolent of the best literature of the past, and illustrates the advantage which genius derives from culture. If the sanctimoniousness which, in the sour spirit of the Pharisee, offensively interferes with the fair freedom of others, is here and there good-naturedly touched, we only say "Let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung." While all the essays are admirable, some of them are very charming. A fine and subtle spirit of criticism is everywhere discernible, and there is manifest a hearty and wholesome relish for all that deserves to be enjoyed.

Apologetic Lectures on the Fundamental Truths of Christianity. By CHR. ERNST LUTHARDT. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

THE Messrs. Clark are for the most part admirably advised as to the works, translated from the German, which they give the English reader. Here, in a single volume, and that not large, they give us a good translation of the third edition of lectures delivered in Leipsic, in the winter of 1864, by the thoroughly competent Professor Luthardt. We do not indeed suppose that men like Strauss, or Eénan, or some of our own scientific unbelievers, would be greatly influenced by the arguments so ably presented; but we believe that very many honest inquirers among us—young men of intelligence, perplexed by the very confident and authoritative decisions of some who seem to be masters of learning or leaders in science, would find here very much of the help they need. There may be objections to a truth for which no answer has yet been found, and yet the truth may be so sufficiently established that there is no reason whatever for disavow, or for holding the truth itself less firmly. Luthardt has provided, to a great extent, the very book we wanted for a large class of thoughtful and intelligent young men, and we heartily recommend it.

The Prince of the House of David; or Three Years in the Holy City
By the Rev. Professor J. H. INGRAHAM. London: Virtue Brothers & Co.

The Pillar of Fire; or, Israel in Bondage. By the same Author and Publishers.

Benaiah. A Tale of the Captivity. By Mrs. WEBB, Author of "Naomi," &c. London: Jackson and Walford.

The Word. Walks from Eden. By the Author of "The Wide, Wide World." London: James Nisbet & Co.

We group these volumes together because they have one aim and one method. The object, which we regard as most praiseworthy, is pursued by a means which we consider perfectly legitimate, and if so, then a very desirable and happy one. The various historical and biographical records with which the scriptures abound are almost universally recognised as marvellously true to nature, and most life-like. Yet, for the most part, they are but sketches, and jottings, and outlines and hints; although, being so perfectly true, like the incomplete bones from which a Cuvier demonstrates the entire animal, though hitherto unknown, they enable a competent and loving worker to deduce the whole. All the persons who play a part, whether primary or subordinate, in the great drama of life which the Bible presents, had, of course, each his own personal and private history. And if, by adequate familiarity with the manners, and customs, and modes of thought, and other specialities of any particular period in the past, a writer well acquainted with the human heart can make the past more vividly present to the ordinary mind, we believe a real service is rendered.

This is what our three authors have aimed at, and we think very fairly succeeded in doing. Mr. Ingraham has taken pains so far to acquaint himself with what is now called Egyptology as to enable him satisfactorily to deal with the times of Moses, who is the central figure in "The Pillar of Fire."

His volume, on the three years of the Life of Christ, in which the various incidents recorded by the Evangelists are woven into one consistent tale, is, of course, the more important of his two contributions. That idea, on the working out of which no amount of knowledge and talent and even genius that could be brought to bear would be superfluous, is worked out very fairly. And we think this high praise. We meet with passages here and there, indeed, which we rather disrelish, and we would gladly have offered a suggestion had we been with the writer when pursuing his work. But on the whole he has done his work satisfactorily. The *dramatis personæ* of the Gospels speak and act for the most part in consistency with what is recorded of them, and they live before us. Occasionally we are conscious of the great difference between the words reported by the evangelists to have been spoken by Christ, and those which Mr. Ingraham puts into His mouth whenever he departs from the written record. It is, however, the point on which even Milton failed. We think that young people will find this book very helpful to enable them to realize the

actual appearance of Christ on earth. And the Son of David and Son of God once seen and loved, a point is gained which will make the sceptical difficulties that abound in our day less painfully felt. And so we think that Mr. Ingraham has rendered a valuable service.

Miss WETHERELL has brought the talent which made her "Wide, Wide World" at one time so popular with the young, to bear on the theme indicated in her title, and will no doubt be welcomed by the same class on her new walk.

Mrs. WEBB's story appeared in one of the magazines for the young, "Merry and Wise," and she has done well now to give it in a separate and permanent form. From our heart we thank all those writers—and our three authors are among them—who interest the young in the scriptures, which are able to make them wise unto salvation.

Essays on Baptismal Regeneration, &c. By JOHN CAMPBELL, D.D.
London: John Snow.

A REPRINT of letters that appeared in the "British Standard," at the close of the controversy awakened by Mr. Spurgeon's notorious sermon on the dogma of baptismal regeneration. These letters are eminently characteristic of their writer. Dr. Campbell is Dr. Campbell still. His faults and his excellencies remain, and in pretty much the same proportion, and while we wish to do ample justice to the former, the latter compel us to confess to incomplete sympathy. The Doctor, in this little volume, touches on many things and many persons, and in his own peculiar style. Take, for example, his estimate of the late Mr. Robertson, of Brighton:—"We have read his sermons, and . . . we must say, a *more miserable jumble it was never our lot to encounter. Of the Gospel he knew nothing, and very little of human nature*; he was a kind of pulpit poet, blending together fact and fancy, and by this means he attracted, often entranced, *the gay and silly multitudes that hung upon his lips.*" The italics are ours. If Dr. Campbell were as wise as he is bold, and vigorous, and indefatigable, and devoted, he might have done still better service in this great controversy, which is by no means yet brought to a close. The book, however, will do good; and we gladly express this opinion, while differing from the author, *toto calo*, on some of his *ex cathedra* doctrinal and ecclesiastical deliverances.

Theology and Life: Sermons Chiefly on Special Occasions. By E. H. PLUMTREE, M.A., Professor of Divinity, &c. London: Alexander Strahan. 1866.

Christ the Light of the World. By C. J. VAUGHAN, D.D. London: Alexander Strahan. 1866.

The Sepulchre in the Garden. By WILLIAM LANDELS, Minister of Regent's Park Chapel. London: Nisbet and Co.

The Model Prayer. Ten Sermons. By Rev. T. LOMAS, Leicester London: Houlston and Wright.

How easily we group volumes, the authors of which, if brought together and introduced, would bow but stiffly to each other. Here

are four volumes of sermons, by clergymen of the Established Church and Nonconformist ministers, who are not likely to make any nearer approach to one another on this side "the veil," than is made by this artificial collocation of their works. And yet they are all Christians, and so, "brethren." And they are all "ministers of Christ." And they are all good men and true; and it would be impossible for anyone of less discernment than the Judge of All, to say which is the worthiest, or which must take the lowest place. However, what mere ecclesiasticism divides, let it be permitted to a *Christian Spectator* to join together.

Mr. PLUMTREE is Professor of Divinity and Chaplain of King's College, London, and Prebendary of St. Paul's. In the walks of scholarship he has made himself known by a translation of the Tragedies of Sophocles, that has well-nigh satisfied even the most fastidious of critics. He is, at the same time, a poet himself, whose "Lazarus, and other poems" has reached a second edition. When we add to this that he is understood to be in earnest and sympathetic co-operation with the present Bishop of London, we have said what is enough to justify considerable expectation on the part of readers who may possess themselves of the present volume. When such a man gives his heart to preparation for the pulpit, and this "on special occasions," we are entitled to anticipate results worthy of "the gift that is in him." And we are not disappointed. These sermons are worth publishing. We find in them ample proof of loving study of the Scriptures, to which an honest and independent mind has devoutly brought its best stores. We give the Table of Contents that our readers may see that there is considerable freshness in the subjects chosen:—The Ministry of Great Cities—The Consecration of the Priesthood—Anathema from Christ—Aiming at Completeness—Kicking against the Pricks—The Prophets of the New Testament—Music in Worship and in Life—Our Life in Heaven—The Life of Moses—The Theology of the Book of Proverbs—The Social Ethics of the Book of Proverbs—Dangers Past and Present—The Education of the Clergy—Self-Knowledge dependent on Obedience—The Ordinary and the Marvellous in the Religious Life—The Dangers of the Religious Temperament—The Confessions of King Solomon—Things New and Old—The Shepherds who Feed Themselves—Other Men's Labours—Justification by Faith, and its first Preacher—With an Appendix on the authorship of the Book of Job.

OF Dr. VAUGHAN, well remembered as former Head Master of Harrow, and now Vicar of Doncaster, one of those rare exceptions who did honestly say, "Nolo Episcopari," we entertain a very high opinion, rejoicing unfeignedly that such men are found ministering to large and attached congregations. These discourses appeared, we believe, in "Good Words," and are now very naturally republished in a separate volume. An equable flow of calm and earnest Christian instruction, by a painstaking and conscientious student of Scripture, who deeply feels that he "watches for souls as one that must give

account," and who is everyway worthy of the responsible post he fills. Such is the impression the perusal of Dr. Vaughan's sermons always produces on us. We feel for him a genuine respect, and heartily wish him God-speed in his work.

WHAT we have to say of Mr. LANDEL's sermons is, that they were no doubt very pleasant sermons for a congregation to listen to, by no means taxing the attention, and yet gently inviting and mildly rewarding it. The thought, for the most part familiar to moderately intelligent Christians, is suitably expressed, in a level strain, which, if it never grandly soars, yet never meanly sinks. The spirit of the volume is truly Christian, and its tendency, to make one holier. Mr. Landels is a minister in whose popularity, and the hold he maintains on a respectable middle-class congregation, we can unfeignedly rejoice. For there is a popularity which tends mainly to the deterioration of its victims, whether in pulpit or in pew; and there are not wanting tokens that the temptation to achieve it, or at least to seek it, is one which has a peculiar and fatal fascination in the present day, for our less cultivated and less disciplined preachers. What thoughtful and devout and reverent men could not suffer themselves to do, the coarser and more self-sufficient and voluble among us will do full confidently. All the more heartily do we give the hand to men who, like Mr. Landels, use the popular gift which they have, not for the vulgarizing of our holy religion, but for the worthy setting of it forth. And yet we would fain suggest that they would do well to set before themselves a standard of excellence far beyond what their congregations demand, and far beyond what the maintenance of their popularity requires.

Mr. LOMAS, of Leicester, has published ten sermons on the Lord's Prayer, which he delivered in the ordinary course of his pastorate. Very pious, and earnest, and good; impressing on our minds the conviction that the preacher is a very respectable and worthy minister of the "gospel of the grace of God," as understood by congregations who, of "things both new and old," take the latter, indeed, with all confidence and gladness, and are so well satisfied, that they can very well dispense with the former. Earnest piety characterizes these sermons.

Memorials of Rev. Wm. Bull, of Newport Pagnell, compiled chiefly from his own Letters, and those of his Friends, Newton, Couper, and Thornton, 1738-1814. By his Grandson, the Rev. JOSIAH BULL, M.A. Second edition. London: Nisbet & Co.

WE heartily congratulate Mr. Bull on the necessity for a second edition so soon of this deeply interesting record. For a whole century the Independent Church at Newport Pagnell has been presided over by the grandfather, the son, and the grandson, in unbroken succession; and we can testify to the honour in which the family name is held in all the country round. Not to have embraced this opportunity

afforded by the completion of the century of holy service, for raising some such memorial, would have been an omission to be regretted.

Religion in Daily Life. By Rev. E. GARBETT, M.A., Incumbent of Christ Church, Surbiton, Surrey. London: Religious Tract Society.

WE fear it is precisely in "daily life" that the "religion" of the present day most fails. The reaction against the somewhat narrow views of both "life" and "religion" that have obtained in some quarters has gone to lengths which may justly excite serious apprehensions; and many a Christian pastor will sympathise with Mr. Garbett in his worthy solicitude "to assist in remedying the intensely painful discrepancy often observable between the principles and the conduct of Christian men." Commending his little volume to the thoughtful attention of both individuals and families, we add our hearty amen to his prayer, that "through the blessing of the Spirit it may fulfil the inspired declaration, 'A word spoken in due season, how good is it!'"

Faith and Victory. A Story of the Progress of Christianity in Bengal. By the late Mrs. MULLENS, of the London Missionary Society.

A melancholy interest attaches to this interesting volume, for ere the full completion of her work the accomplished and devoted authoress was called "behind the veil." But we sincerely trust that many a Hindu family, and especially many a Hindu woman, will have reason to bless the Giver of every good and perfect gift for a volume so admirably adapted to the end that was so ardently aimed at and so happily pursued. "It was originally intended that this little book should be published only in the Bengalee language, in the hope that, in some instances at least, it might penetrate the walls of the Hindu zenana, and be the means of presenting the truth to its secluded inmates in a simple and attractive form." We are glad, however, that it is now given to English readers, and we wish for it an extensive circulation. Being in the form of a tale of Hindu life, illustrating manners and modes of thought, it is additionally calculated to interest our young friends as well as Christians in general.

The Butterfly's Gospel, and other Stories. By FREDERIKA BREMER. Translated by Margaret Howitt. London: Jackson, Walford, & Hodder.

THREE pretty-enough stories for little children, now reprinted from "Merry and Wise," and elegantly sent forth in green and gold as a Christmas gift-book.

Memoirs of the Life, Character, and Writings of Rev. Matthew Henry. By Sir JOHN BICKERTON WILLIAMS, F.S.A. Second Edition. London: William Tegg.

THE former edition was published in 1828, and in what sense this is "a new edition" is not explained, the preface bearing only the

original date. If it be not a new edition, it ought not to be called so. However, such men as Matthew Henry deserve to be had in everlasting remembrance.

The Christian Brave ; or, some Remarkable Passages from the Life of Mr. A. Roberts, of Connecticut, U.S. Edited by Rev. T. SEAVILL. London : Elliot Stock.

THE memorial of a man who, with singular simplicity of heart and fervency of love, devoted himself to doing the will of his Saviour, labouring with a beautiful disinterestedness among Indian tribes, and afterwards in some parts of Europe, winning men to goodness and God by the spirit which lived in him.

Jesus Tempted in the Wilderness. The Combat—The Weapons—The Victory. By ADOLPHE MONOD. London : Nisbet & Co.

WE thank the publisher for giving the English reader this ripe fruit of the chastened and disciplined piety of the earnest and devout Monod, believing that there are very few Christians who would not be benefited by the quiet reading of it, not, however, anywhere or anywhen, but in the "closet," when "the door is shut."

BOOKS RECEIVED,—FEB. 19.

Eastward. By NORMAN MACLEOD, D.D.

St. Paul: His Life and Ministry. By T. BINNEY.

Echoes of Apostolic Teaching. By Rev. EDWARD BICKERSTETH.]

Expositions on the Epistles. By C. D. MARSTON, M.A.

The Workman and the Franchise. By F. D. MAURICE, M.A.

The Hidden Life.

Organised Christianity. By Author of "Human Destiny."

Life's Everlasting Victory. By Rev. W. K. MOORE, M.A.

Tom Carter.

Parables of Jesus.

Friends of Jesus.

Tales of My Sunday Scholars. By Mrs. SCOTT.

The Glorious Gospel. By JOHN PULSFORD.

The Day Dawn.

What Makes a Good Son and a Glad Father.

Little Patience.

A Woman's Thoughts on the Education of Girls. By Mrs. ROG.

Is the Bible the Word of God? By a Layman of the Church of England.

This Year Also. By Dr. CUMMING.

The Pestilence. By J. BIDEN.

Sunday. By E. H. PLUMPTRE, M.A.

THE CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR.

APRIL, 1866.

THE ROUND TABLE.

CHAPTER IV.

COLLEGE LIFE—GOING TO SUPPLY—SETTLEMENT—WHAT DOES SHE
THINK OF THE GABLES?—OXFORD—THE MEETING AND THE
REPULSE—HOME.

DURING Mr. Langston's student course he often went "to supply" some church that was without a minister, or whose pastor might require help. And the opportunities thus afforded him of observing some of the peculiar phases of Nonconformist life were not lost. It was not only instructive, but at first often very amusing, to note the very various kinds of "earthen vessel" in which more or less of the heavenly "treasure" was (really or presumably) deposited. He often met with men (and, for that matter, with women too) of a kind whose very existence even he could never have suspected, had he not become thus naturalized among Dissenters, a denizen of the Nonconformist world. And many a sketch of character did he good-humouredly draw, which was recognized by "the brethren" as true to the life. He tried to compare "deacons" with "churchwardens;" but, on the whole, inclined to the notion that they constituted a distinct *species* of the genus HOMO. Student experiences of "going to supply" are sometimes, it must be confessed, rather funny; but there were times when Mr. Langston returned to College mortified and disgusted; and he used to write to Mr. Fletcher that

occasionally he had need of all his principles in order to be able to behave courteously to some he came in contact with. But on the whole he got on pretty well in his new world, and never thought of turning his back upon it, because of the discovery that a man might be a staunch Dissenter without being much of a Christian, and an "office-bearer" without being even the fraction of a gentleman.

It was amusing to him at first, too, to see the little manifestations that took place in the class-room on a Saturday morning when the good Doctor appeared an hour or two after the post was in, having made out his list of appointments "to supply," and detailed (as they would say in the army) certain of the young men for certain places. A public school is a world in miniature, and a school of the prophets is another. There are not indeed all the same passions seething and working as in the great outer world; but human nature reveals itself as human nature still, even when very decidedly penetrated by the hallowing influences of the mighty gospel. But all the evils are wonderfully modified and reduced; and it must be confessed that, speaking generally, the effect produced by religion on the character is very manifest in our Colleges.

Jones might be a little vain that he was so constantly sent for by congregations that ranked among the students as "A one." And Robinson might be a little mortified that he was seldom or never wanted a second time. And Brown might possibly be a little unjust when he ascribed Smith's general acceptableness to a flashy, showy style in the pulpit, and an easy habit of making himself agreeable to the wives and daughters of worthy deacons; a habit, he alleged, acquired probably at the large "establishment" in town, where once he displayed both his perons nad powers in "the shawl and mantle department." And White might be a little envious when, and not unfrequently, Saturday passed over without his getting an appointment, and might very naturally set down the neglect he experienced to people's proverbial insensibility to men of real merit. And Jackson might be a little vain-glorious, as he told on Monday evenings of the flattering reception he had met with, and the encouraging remarks that had been made upon his sermons. And Williams, when the grand London churches asked specially for him when they applied for a student, might be a little too much disposed to give himself airs, and fancy himself already a great "Metropolitan divine."

But, on the whole, the various manifestations of our common human infirmity were tolerably mild; the moral ailments not very serious, say, of the minor kind; not acute, and yet also not chronic. There were, however, one or two students who

ought never to have been admitted, and for whose future their brethren—who could not but know them well, seeing the close intimacy which cannot but subsist in “the house”—had their very serious misgivings.

Mr. Langston, after a time, had his full share of appointments, and it was by-and-by observed that Dr. Faber used generally to send him to those congregations which he thought most highly of. At the close of his course, he accepted an invitation to occupy for a year the pulpit of one of the most esteemed ministers of the day, to whom a period of perfect rest and change had become indispensable. And at the termination of the engagement he was earnestly requested by both minister and people to settle with them as a “co-pastor;” but this, by the advice of Mr. Fletcher and Dr. Faber, he declined. He then “supplied for a month” at Bablyk-Hythe, a place he had occasionally visited during his student course. And this engagement for a month was “with a view” (to use the technical terminology of the diaconate); and, at the close of it, he was almost unanimously invited to take the pastorate.

The fact of a minority, however, though very small, that did not concur in the invitation, made him hesitate; but, on learning the real character of the noncontents, he allowed their opposition to weigh but as the small dust of the balance against the earnest desire of the most intelligent and devout portion of the congregation. The dissidents, he was assured, “might be counted on one’s fingers; and they were a knot of fussy, disagreeable persons whom it would be a blessing to be rid of.” “There was that Lynch,” a journeyman shoemaker, as sharp as his awl, and as full of conceit and prate as an egg is of meat, always insisting on “his rights,” and quite as oblivious of his duties. He objected to Mr. Langston, as not satisfying him on “the five points.” The reader will remember we are speaking of years and years ago.

“Then there was old Higgings,” a low, vulgar fellow, who had been smuggled into the Church during a very unfortunate pastorate (which happily was also very brief). He could do things for gain which few would stoop to, and, by scraping, “had got together a goodish bit of money;” but his old habits clung to him, and he was a disagreeable man at home and abroad, everywhere and to everybody. He objected to Mr. Langston as being “a stuck-up gentleman, whereas a Christian minister ought to be *umble*.”

But the malcontents were kept in countenance by Mr. Godden, a retired baker, who had made quite a little fortune, and deemed himself, on that account, entitled to be consulted about everything. He liked to “hold the plate” at a collection,

because then he could avoid putting anything in. He was close-fisted, as you may see—ignorant, very proud of being able to “live upon his means,” and, not now being in business, expected to be styled, as he styled himself, “a gentleman”! He prided himself, too, on his “spirituality,” and his desire for the prosperity of “this little hill of thy spiritual Zion,” as he said in every prayer. He complained that Mr. Langston was “not spiritual enough” for him. These were the chief dissentients as described by members of the Church whom Mr. Langston knew he could rely on for truthful representation. And it must be confessed that no valid reason can be assigned why such persons should have their whims treated with any consideration. Such may and do occasionally find their way into some of our churches, and do untold mischief. But unless we allow common sense to be dragged, as a captive about to be immolated, at the chariot-wheels of triumphant Folly—unless we are unable to discern the difference between Christian brotherhood and vulgar democracy run to seed,—we shall resolutely treat such persons as they deserve to be treated, without any regard to their foolish claims or to their worse than foolish prate, which no society in the world would tolerate. The most constitutional Englishman of us all will cheerfully consent to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act when a folly like Fenianism avows itself, and which is none the less mischievous and wicked because so contemptibly ridiculous. And the most thorough Nonconformist should allow himself to give mischievous folly no more quarter in our churches. We owe it to ourselves—we owe it to the character of our Free Churches—we owe it to those outside who are watching us—we owe it to the quiet and honourable portion of our congregations—we owe it to the poor foolish creatures themselves,—to hold up such a mirror to them as that they shall see what they ought to think of themselves. In holy loyalty to that “Order” which, if not, indeed, “Heaven’s first law,” is certainly among the primary, let such men be put in their proper places—and kept there.

A few minutes’ conversation with each of those who “could not conscientiously vote for him,” convinced Mr. Langston that it would be highly reprehensible to allow such opposition as theirs to influence either his judgment or his inclination. So he yielded to the solicitation of the body of Christian people, and became their pastor. The church at Bablyk-Hythe at that time stood rather high in the general estimation. It happened that there were a few thoroughly intelligent families connected with it; families in a good social position, and happy specimens of the combination of religion with culture, who knew how to appreciate such a minister, and whose kindly respectful manner gave the tone to others. So that, although there was latent in the

church a considerable amount of the ruder democratic element, yet this was kept tolerably in check by the presence and spirit of a better class. And Mr. Langston settled there with a fair prospect of comfort and usefulness.

After he had resided in Bablyk-Hythe for nearly a year, the house became vacant to which we have already introduced our readers—The Gables; and Mr. Langston invested nearly a half of his little property in the advantageous purchase of it, and in putting it in order. And great was the pleasure he felt in having it thoroughly prepared and nicely furnished, as the future home of her he hoped soon now to call his wife. What innocent gratification he found in superintending the various processes—how carefully he chose the paper of this and that room, with an eye to what he knew would be her taste—with what tender thoughtfulness he planned everything in the chamber that would be more especially hers, or rather theirs, I need not say. There were delays, of course, and petty disappointments, and the pains that had been taken in the garden would not tell for a time. But, still, when at last he actually brought her home, and when, as she stepped out of the carriage, and glanced up at the house, and round on the garden, and fondly and gratefully pressed his arm; and when he had exultingly led her in, and from room to room, till at last they stood finally in that which was to be the tenderest, sacredest of all; was not all the past forgotten, or remembered only to add to the deep, deep joy and gratitude of the present!

It was the month of May, as we told our readers in the first chapter. And it was what people in the country call “an old-fashioned May.” For somehow there seems to have come about a rather sad discrepancy between the May of the poets and of our youth, and the actual May of some later years. Mr. Kingsley may sing a brave song if he will to the east wind, and we, too, have been able at times to welcome it. But a cold, bitter, biting east wind in the month of May is such a contradiction to all our pleasant idyllic notions of the genial time, that it is no wonder we find it difficult to accept it. But, as I have said, this was an old-fashioned May, and I am glad to my heart, for their dear sakes, that it was. The air was soft and balmy; the thin fleecy clouds were so white and fairy-like, high up in the blue sky; and the lark was singing over head, as they two, after some little time in the house, went into the garden, which, as we already know, was bounded on two sides by a low hedge of privet mixed with sweet-briar and honeysuckle, which separated it from a green meadow that went gently sloping away downwards, and was itself bounded by hedge-rows of hawthorn with elms every here and there; beyond which were fields of spring

corn, and beyond them again the river; and then on the other side of that, rising ground covered with woods, which this year were a little in advance of the country rhyme that every little whistling ploughboy and cottage lassie used to repeat—

“Half green, half grey,
By the sixth of May.”

In our last chapter I declined to gratify a certain young lady friend by dwelling on the pleasant days that followed the mutual engagement of Mr. Langston and Mary Fletcher. But I am now actually going to tell her of one of the arrangements of the wedding-day. Ah, the wedding-day!—what a day indeed is that!—so full of hope and joy, tenderly qualified by a deeper sense of the uncertainty of the future, and by partings, and by a pathos which blends its minor with the sound of the merry, merry bells! The very day, truly, for a first miracle; and when we may well hope the water will be turned into wine. Ah, if the wine should but last!—if it did not so often, in a little while, run to the lees; or, indeed, seem resolved back again into water; or, worse than that even, to have turned first flat and then sour! “Marriage,” says Colton, “is a feast, where the grace is sometimes better than the dinner.” Surely, however, not by divine appointment, not in the nature of things, but only by our poor petty human unwisdom. Often, for want of care and thoughtfulness in little things; often, because the love was of so poor and thin a kind at first as not to deserve the name; or, because it was not love at all, but only a passing fancy kept up for a time, and warmed by the stimulants furnished from the outermost and lowest realm of our nature. Alas! for some homes; where, instead of mated hearts being mutual bound, persons only are coupled. “There is a place,” says M. De St. Lambert, “where pure joys are unknown, from which politeness is banished, and has given place to selfishness, contradictions, and half-veiled insults. Remorse and inquietude, like furies that are never weary of assailing, torment the inhabitants. This place is the house of a wedded pair who have no mutual love, nor even esteem.—There is a place on the earth to which vice has no entrance, where the gloomy passions have no empire, where pleasure and innocence live constantly together, where cares and labours are delightful, where every pain is forgotten in reciprocal tenderness, where there is an equal enjoyment of the past, the present, and the future. It is the house, too, of a wedded pair, but of a pair who, in wedlock, are lovers still.” May I be pardoned if I add the remark of Swift’s, that one “reason why so few marriages are happy, is because young ladies spend their time in making nets, not in making cages.” But Swift was a sour, disappointed man, and a bachelor withal.

He was a shrewd observer, however, and I would not have his remark unduly pooh-poohed.

But here I am, I declare, going off into a digression on wedded life in general, while my young lady friend is ready to charge me with a breach of promise; for did I not intimate I would give her a small morsel of information about one of the arrangements of the wedding-day? True. But see how "prone to wander" we are, and truly "I feel it." For no sooner had I written that word, which, when it is sounding in the future, has to many so sweet a sound—that magic word—than my pen, which has a trick of its own, began at once to wander; yet not altogether unallowed, for indeed I think there is a great deal that might be said with advantage on the general subject. However, the peculiarity I meant to touch on was this: We all know that in these days very few of us do what our own taste, or our inclination, or our common sense, or even our judgment prescribes; but we all have, however reluctantly, to follow the fashion. We are more sheep-like than ever; you know if one sheep jumps over a hurdle, even if it be quite an imaginary one, every one of the flock will imitate the leader, and jump too. And can any deeper reason than this be alleged for a practice, which within the last thirty years or so, has grown so common as to be as well worth calling "a law" as sundry other uniformities that we wot of; the practice, we mean, of a man's taking his bride, on the very day which marks the most memorable in all her history (to say nothing of his own), taking her away from her father's house—the home of her childhood and girlhood—full of all tender associations; taking her from her mother's arms, amid more fond tears and kisses than smiles; taking her with all the multitudinous thoughts and varying emotions of that strange eventful day—off to an hotel!

The good old English custom used to be, as with the Romans and the Hebrews before us, and indeed every nation under heaven, for the man to lead her in happy triumph to his own home. Amid the sanctities of home it was that she drew off and laid aside her maiden veil, and all the tender and blessed and hallowing associations of the first day of wedded life were wisely made to cluster round their mutual home. Now, by all means, my young friend, take her to—an hotel! Let servants, not her own, but the proverbial waiters and chambermaids of our hotels, bestow their officious and nicely-calculated attentions, scanning her with vulgar, prying eyes, and scarcely caring to conceal their mutual telegraphy. And let all the various little annoyances that abound in the majority of hotels be sure to mingle with the strangely solemn yet happy and holy experiences of that unique day. Oh, yes! off to an hotel with you, and let

the "Rose and Thistle," or the "Blue Lion," ever after live in the memory as the sacred spot consecrated by the first hours of the new relationship. Of course, *de gustibus, &c.*; but one is almost ready to ask whether, in this quite modern fashion, we may not read one of the signs of the times; whether ideas and feelings, as well as customs, have not undergone some change; whether we may not perhaps read in it a diminished regard and reverence for the home? Is there less of the true-hearted old English *homeliness* amongst us? Certainly, in many quarters, there is a shallowness of feeling which is not pleasant to note. And the idle thing called "fashion" seems to rule us all; and all things, however sacred, however tender, must be submitted to her silly, simpering arbitrament. The foolish French people, in their wild revolutionary delirium, took a decked-out courtesan as their chosen symbol, and hailed her as the Goddess of Reason. The female divinity of many a circle in England, in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, is—Mrs. Grundy.

Mr. Langston knew better. He had felt a holy pleasure in planning all the little arrangements of every room, and he intended to hallow their future home by the blessedest associations. And so he took his bride from her parent's house to his own—from home to home—that the tenderness of that first day might ever after be kept fresh and fragrant by the happy reminiscences which every room and every object would suggest. And so she entered the house as a bride. And when, after showing her one room after another, the sitting-room, the parlour (middle class people had not got on to "drawing-rooms" then), the study, and after a turn or two round the garden he left her in her own chamber for a while,—I rather fancy she knelt there to pour out her full heart with calmer and deeper and gladder feelings than she could have done at the "King's Arms," or "Grosvenor Hotel."

Some of Mr. Langston's friends, who were ready beforehand to welcome her as a friend too, had, with great kindness and delicacy and taste, seen that everything was ready for their reception, even to all the little domestic arrangements. And when she entered her chamber she found the pleasantest tokens of the welcome that awaited her. And Martha, a modest servant-maid of the good old times, that mistresses now-a-days think of with a sigh,—Martha was all smiles and curtsies to receive her new mistress, and saw at a glance that "it would be a pleasure to serve such a nice mistress."

But although the first days of their wedded life were thus happily spent in the sacred retreat of home, Mr. Langston had planned a little trip before having to lead her into the "minister's pew," and to introduce her to so many strangers, and settling

down to all the duties of life. So, at the end of the week, he took her to a spot he had greatly longed to see again, but had never visited since the days of his youth—to dear old Oxford. And there they rambled about the old familiar places—familiar, that is, to him—for to her all was new. He went to Oriel—showed her the rooms which used to be his; and of course there his mind was busier, and his heart was fuller, than hers could be. So much came back, and so vividly! Being “term-time,” the streets were thronged by the young men in their academic costume—a novel sight to her. But none knew him. He was a stranger, even in Oxford! And there was the Broad-walk, and Christ Church meadow—ah, the Cherwell, again!—and the beautiful Isis! He must row her down to Nuneham; and he did. And they rambled about the wooded hills there, where vast patches of bluebells (or wild hyacinths, rather) would have reminded them, if Tennyson’s marvellous idyll, “Guinevere” had then been written, of the line that has been so hyper-critically carped at—

“ . . . groves that look’d a paradise
Of blossom, over sheets of hyacinth
That seem’d the heavens up-breaking thro’ the earth.”

And he must drive her over to Blenheim. And there was Shotover-hill, and the Hinckseys, to be foraged over, as Dr. Arnold used to say. And she must see New College Chapel, and Christ Church, and Magdalen (there called “Modlin,” or “Maudlin”). And spend one delicious evening-hour in St. John’s Gardens, and a part of another morning in Worcester. On the Sunday he took her to St. Mary’s to hear Mr. Newman, who was even then beginning to be recognized as a man of mark, and likely, it was thought, to leave his stamp upon the age. Mr. Newman was a fellow of Oriel; and so one day, as he was walking down the High-street, apparently absorbed in thought, taking no notice of anyone or anything, right or left—(dressed in a shabby suit of rusty black, with his too short trousers and low shoes, showing an ample amount of blue cotton stocking, and the too short coat-sleeves, showing all the wrists and ungloved hands)—Mr. Langston, meeting him, accosted him, and was quickly recognized by the man who had such a power of fascination over so many young men. Rapidly, but kindly, although with almost solemn kindness, interrogated as to his present whereabouts, and of course frankly avowing the change that had taken place, and his present character as a Nonconformist minister—Mr. Newman looked shocked, deeply grieved, and hurt; sighed heavily; put his hand to his brow for an instant; then, turning away his head, as from a sight unholy, and with both hands open, and

their uplifted palms turned repellently outward against the apostate—he passed on.

Mr. Langston felt acutely for a moment what it was to be a Nonconformist. It seemed to him as though Oxford—his own fondly-cherished Oxford, whom still he loved to call his Alma Mater—had, in the person of one of her most distinguished sons, thrown him off, disowned him, and disdained him. And he did not pretend to be insensible to the altered feeling with which, as he knew full well, all tutors and “heads” would regard him now. And why? Had he thrown off his allegiance to Christ? Had he dishonoured religion? Had he renounced his country? Had he grown regardless of his character, and gone off into all sorts of wild and wicked excesses? None of these things. Worse, unutterably worse!—he had become a Dissenter. He might have habitually broken all the Ten Commandments, excepting only the sixth. He might have been a swearer, and a gambler, and a corrupter of youth, and his breath a pollution, and Oxford (in those days, at all events) would not have frowned upon him. He might have been as complete a reprobate as that “first gentleman in Europe” (save the mark!), whom for years every clergyman in every service called in solemn prayer to Almighty God, “Our most religious and gracious King, George the Fourth,” and who was for a time, “By the grace of God, Defender of the Faith,” and the Supreme Head of the Church of England—and Oxford would have given him degrees, and his fair chance of a fellowship or a living. But a Nonconformist!—No. Mr. Langston was a more conscientious man, a more devout man, a more intelligent and earnest Christian man than before; but he was a Nonconformist! And there was not in those days a single college tutor or a head of a college that would have shaken hands with him; such littleness, such paltriness, such bitterness, does the State-Church principle infuse into English life and all our social relations!

But Mr. Langston was one of those who knew how to accept with (for the most part, and in general) tolerable equanimity the consequences of daring to interpret for himself the will of Christ, and he never shrugged his shoulders at nonconformity because of the cold shade in which it has to walk. Some good men, whose convictions are such that they cannot help being Nonconformists, are nevertheless perpetually girding at nonconformity for all the vexations and annoyances they have to put up with as Dissenters—unworthily shutting their eyes to the fact that these are in reality caused solely by the existence of an Established Church. Why, the man whom the spiteful Jews put out of the synagogue (excommunicated) for speaking favourably of Jesus, might as fairly have blamed the

Son of God for the harsh treatment he received, as our effeminate, semi-worldly, nerveless, back-boneless Dissenters blame dissent for what is less pleasant in their social status, or what (because of their nonconformity) has militated against their greater success in life. Where there is no State-Church there is no dissent. Let namby-pambyism look to it. Mr. Langston knew better than to blame nonconformity because, being now a Nonconformist, there was no place for him in Oxford, and no "Churchman" that would know him.

He returned home to work, with, thank God, his wife to brighten his "study," and gladden and strengthen his heart. And pleasant were the greetings she received, and very precious all the tokens of warm-hearted regard they met with. For at that time there was a very happy tone that characterized the people of Bablyk-Hythe; and the young wife was at once made to feel that her lot was cast, not among a cold, ungenial, ungenerous people, who would take good care that there should not be too much sunshine; but among frank, kindly, and pleasant friends, with whom intercourse would be not merely a duty that could not be refused, but a happy addition to all the dear delights of home. And so we leave them at The Gables.

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY.

THAT two defences of systematic theology, both apologetic in character, should have appeared almost simultaneously from the pens of presidents of colleges* is, to say the least of it, a noticeable fact. Assuming them to have been occasioned by the "much modern clamour" against theology which is said to have arisen, it may not be impertinent to inquire how far the outcry, if it really exists, is justifiable or otherwise.

In attempting this task, it becomes necessary, first of all, to ascertain precisely what is to be understood by "theology," and then to what extent the study of it may, properly speaking, be regarded as a science. This is the more important, since the accomplished writer in the *British Quarterly* stakes everything on this issue. He says that, "whether systematic theology be

* *Brit. Quart. Rev.*, LXXXV., Jan. 1866, Art. vii., "Inductive Theology." This paper has been publicly attributed to Prof. Henry Rogers.—"*Sunday at Home*," Jan. and Feb. 1866. "Theological Papers," by the Rev. Jos. Angus, D.D. No. 1. "Theology, an Inductive Science." No. 2. "How far is Theology a Progressive Science?"

useful or pernicious must depend entirely on the definition given of it, the limits assigned to it, and the principles on which it is prosecuted."

For much that has been called theology he has no respect whatever. "The Pyramid of Cheops itself would," he says, "dwindle beside that enormous structure of paper rubble and dead men's brains," which would arise if the ponderous tomes of scholastic divines were gathered for such a construction. "An impossible vanity," a "vain and visionary science," an "achievement that can exist only in name"—*these* are the terms in which he rightly characterizes attempts "to give complete logical development and logical symmetry to the facts of revelation; to trace a vast edifice, of which only detached parts are open to our inspection; to lay down a perfect chart of a country, when the fountains of its rivers lie remote in untracked deserts, and the summits of the mountains are enveloped in perpetual cloud."

What, then, we ask, ought to be regarded as a true and faithful definition of a theology which, free from the extravagance condemned, may justly claim to be "a most legitimate branch of inductive science, the importance of which it is not easy to exaggerate?" What are its limits, and what the principles on which it is to be prosecuted?

It is not easy to find in the papers under notice any very clear and unequivocal answer to this question. We are told, very forcibly, *what is not* a legitimate theology. We are, in a great measure, *left to infer* what is; yet not entirely so, as we shall shortly see.

Dr. Angus defines theology as "that methodical interpretation of Scripture, the result of which is systematic divinity." Mr. Rogers says, "a systematic *Christian* theology is a systematized view of the facts respecting God and our relations to Him, obtained by induction of the substantial contents of revelation." Neither of these statements, however, assign the limits under which it is supposed the relation of truth to truth can be traced, or the extent to which the whole may be co-ordinated. That which chiefly strikes one in these definitions is an evident desire to *contract* the functions of theology as much as possible.

This constant endeavour to keep the claims of the sacred science within reasonable bounds, seems, every now and then, to give something like a contradictory air to the statements made regarding it. At one time, Scripture is spoken of as a revelation of "*facts*, some of them seemingly paradoxical, the *nexus*, the harmony of which we vainly strive to explore, their *rational* singly, and their theoretic harmony one with another lying *beyond us*." At another time, we are called upon "to analyze the precise logical contents (of the Bible); to trace their relations

and coherence, and to co-ordinate them with one another in their mutual relations ; in a word, to *elicit a system or fabric of truth* from the analysis of the entire contents of revelation." By this means only, we are told, will the expositor form "a just idea of the *proportionate* importance of the various elements of divine truth." In one place, systematic theology is simply "a systematized view of the facts respecting God and our relations to Him." In another, it is "the true extrication and methodical arrangement of the great truths which make up 'the whole counsel of God,' *in the order of their importance*, and as interconnected and inter-dependent." Thus far the *British Quarterly*.

Dr. Angus, again, in applying the principle of induction to Scripture, first tells us that "the texts of Scripture are the phenomena," and that the business of the theologian is merely "to ascertain the truths they teach, the duties they enjoin, and the practical inferences they suggest ;" and then, *further on*, that texts, like facts in natural science, "may be studied so as to ascertain laws, generalized facts and *causes*." In one place, he tells us that "every man who compares Scripture with Scripture and generalises the lesson, "practises the induction which scientific theology demands, and that Scripture *is itself*" a revelation of laws, that is, of generalized facts, as well as of particular instances." In another, theology is made out to be that view of Scripture which "assigns to every truth and duty such a place, *both in order and in importance*, as properly belongs to it." It is spoken of as "perfected, when it *sums up in generalized truth or precept* all we read." We are told, indeed, that the theologian, in doing this, is "to say precisely what Scripture says—*neither more nor less* ;" but this is merely to say that he is to perform an impossibility.

The *illustrations* furnished, fail in their application. "Philosophers in the middle ages," it is observed, "had noticed that water ascends in a pump when the raising of the piston-rod creates a vacuum." They therefore concluded that "Nature abhors a vacuum," a generalization which, if accurate, would indicate "*a cause*." Induction has proved this to be an error, and has corrected the *law*. "Nature's abhorrence of a vacuum is found to cease, for mercury at thirty inches, and for water at two-and-thirty feet."

"Let us now," says Dr. Angus, "apply these principles to theology." Scripture teaches (for the texts of Scripture are the phenomena) that "if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves ;" it teaches further, that "all have sinned," and that "by deeds of law can no flesh be justified." The *doctrine of total depravity* is a fair summary, in common language, of the divine teaching. *This* is the induction. But what have we

gained by it? Obviously nothing at all, Dr. Angus himself being judge; for, as he truly says, "the generalization is worthless, until we have clearly stated what we mean by 'total depravity.' Does it mean that every man not yet converted is as bad as he can be? In that sense men are not totally depraved; for 'evil men and seducers *was worse and worse.*' Does it mean that all men are *equally*, because *totally*, depraved? In that sense, men are not totally depraved, for there is endless diversity of character and of punishment.* But if it means that sin has touched and corrupted every part of our nature, total depravity does seem a doctrine of Scripture and even a conclusion of experience."

All this is very true; but the question what is really *meant* by "total depravity" still remains unsettled. How shall we arrive at a satisfactory solution of it? Creeds, confessions, and articles of faith—always regarded as the highest triumphs of theological skill—*here* fail us. According to the Articles of the Church of England, which are of course supposed to harmonize with the creeds, by *native* depravity (for the word "total" is not used) man is "very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil." According to the Westminster Confession, "man is utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite unto all that is spiritually good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that continually." Which of these somewhat conflicting utterances are we to suppose embodies "precisely what Scripture says,—neither more nor less"? Surely a simple-minded believer will find it both wiser and safer to *set both aside*, and to fall back upon the plain declarations, or, as I should call them, *facts*† of Scripture.

The illustration offered from natural science seems to be every way unfortunate; for it only proves that while the Natural Philosopher, by applying the principle of induction to nature, has been set right as to a fact, has corrected a supposed law, and has applied his knowledge to practical purposes by constructing a barometer—the theologian, by using the same instrument, has, in the instance brought forward, gained absolutely nothing at all, unless it be gain to exchange simple belief in the fact that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," for everlasting strife about a "doctrine of total depravity."

Equally unfortunate is the reference, in the second paper,

* How "endless diversity of punishment" can consist with the *eternity* of all future punishment in the "Lake of Fire," if ultimate extinction is not to be admitted, is beyond comprehension. But this particular theological conclusion is not now under notice.

† See Robert Hall's sermon "On the Glory of God in Concealing a Matter," and Dr. Hampden's "Bampton Lectures."

to the Nicene and Athanasian creeds as illustrating the *progressive* character of theological science; or, as Dr. Angus puts it, "the progressive fulness of explanation of Scripture truth." Surely such phrases as "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made" are mere surplusage, *if not something worse*. As to the Athanasian creed, I forbear to characterize it, only expressing regret that it should have even been referred to as evidence that "theology admits of *progress* of some kind,—that its truths are better understood and more accurately explained in one age than in another."

Dr. Angus seems scarcely willing to allow that Scripture is nothing more than a revelation of facts. "The distinction," he says, "sometimes made between the facts of Scripture and the doctrines *founded* on them, as if the first were scriptural and the second not, is unjust. In scriptural theology the fact, and the scriptural explanation of the fact—the doctrine as we call it—rest upon the same authority. The historical facts of the Bible, and the theological explanations of the Bible, are both *founded* on Scripture texts, and both are alike divine."

But *who*, it may respectfully be asked, makes any distinction between "historical facts" in the Bible and the "theological explanations of the Bible?" Not the sceptic; for he denies the facts—especially all that imply supernatural agency—and does not trouble himself at all about the doctrines. Not the believer; for he makes no distinction whatever between facts and doctrines, *excepting in so far as the latter are merely human deductions*. Besides, if a doctrine is stated in Scripture, it is not *founded* thereupon, but found therein,—it is *itself* Scripture. An "historical fact" recorded in the Book, is not "founded on Scripture texts,"—it is itself the text; and a "theological explanation of the Bible,"—by which it may be presumed we are to understand *inspired reasoning*, such as St. Paul gives us, is not founded on texts; it is itself a part of the revealed testimony, being truth communicated in a dogmatic manner, and authoritatively taught.

Further,—Before it can be admitted that "doctrines *founded* on Scripture" are as divine as the facts on which they are founded, it is necessary to ascertain under what manipulation they have taken shape; and, since they can be at best only human deductions, it is but reasonable to demand that he who deduces should *prove* his possession of what Rome claims,—*"Divine discernment, and Divine certainty."* A visible and infallible church thus becomes a necessity; a church which is endowed by the Holy Spirit with power "to conceive with fulness, explicitness, and clearness, the original truth in all its relations—to define that truth in words, and to create a sacred

terminology, which should become a permanent tradition, and a perpetual expression of the original revelation.”*

But to return. Both writers insist that theology is as much a science as chemistry, or any other branch of natural philosophy. Professor Rogers says theology is “systematic in the sense in which astronomy, or chemistry, or geology, or any other of the sciences of induction are so.” And again,—“In the volumes of revelation and nature we see a close and instructive analogy. Chemistry, like theology, finds no lack of inextricable mysteries. Still it is a systematic exhibition of certain classes of phenomena, and of unspeakable value as far as it goes; and *it is much the same with theology.*”†

Dr. Angus takes similar ground. He says, “In the year 1600 there was no science in England. In the year 1700 men were questioning Nature in all her departments; and the grandest mechanical generalization of any age—that of gravitation—had been completed and applied to the explanation of both earthly and heavenly phenomena. The principle (of induction) has been repeatedly explained and defended; two of the ablest exponents of it, Sir John Herschel and Dr. Whewell, belonging to our own day. And yet, *on the application of this principle to theology, we have no treatise.*”

The fact is, the analogy here drawn cannot be sustained, *except on the assumption*, which these writers apparently disavow, that “some articles of the Christian faith are left by Divine wisdom, *that we may deduce them* by careful investigation and fair reasoning;”‡ or, that the object of systematic theology is, among other things, to show “*how and why* biblical doctrines agree.”|| Short of this it is hard to see how theology can be a science at all. It must, one would think, to justify such a claim, at least assume that, since the facts of Scripture, though given to us in an insulated form, are really connected,

* Manning’s “Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost.”

† The Rev. Henry Allon, in a recently published paper on “Philosophy and Prayer,” distinctly maintains that “theology is a science as much as chemistry. It is as reasonable a thing,” he says, “for the man of science to submit himself to the theologian in the domain of theology, as it is for the theologian to submit himself to the man of science in the domain of science.”

‡ Dr. Pye Smith in a sermon at Mr. Wall’s. So, recently, Dr. Manning: “Theology consists in a scientific treatment of revealed truths, both of the primary and of the secondary order. Those of the primary order are the truths which are expressly revealed; those of the secondary, *the conclusions which are deduced from them by process of reasoning.*”

|| Professor Nenner, in his introductory lecture at the opening of New College. So *Sanseverino*, quoted by Manning,—Theological science viewed subjectively is “the certain and evident knowledge of *the ultimate reasons or principles* of truth, attained by reasoning.”

that connection may be made out by study, and exhibited by man; that the law which regulates this connection may be arrived at by the help of human learning and dialectic skill; and that the discovery, when made, may be applied to practical purposes. Science is not mere information humbly accepted: "it is systematic and organized knowledge obtained progressively; it is a body of truth, so compacted together, that every part of it is seen to stand in its due relation to every part and to the whole; it is a methodical way of investigating and arranging truth *as distinguished from* simple acquiescence in what we are told, or the mere heaping up of information."

If *results* may be adduced as evidence, the *unreality* of the supposed analogy may be demonstrated. Chemistry is a science which, within a very short time, has been absolutely revolutionized; the old has been disproved or superseded; the new has been born, and with giant strides leads on to ever fresh discoveries. But theology, when "perfected," can never get beyond the revealed facts of Scripture. If we speak of it at all as *progressive*, it is only in the sense of scriptural progression; by which we mean, not anything gained by inductions of our own, or by any skill of ours in the analysis of revelation; not advancement as the result of our eliciting the proportionate importance of the various elements of Divine truth, or of our discovering the extent to which one truth becomes either the complement or the limitation of another; but simply progress as the result of a better acquaintance with the sacred text, accompanied by that gradual unfolding of truth which God makes to each individual man as he grows in grace, or to the Church at large as it advances with the ages. If, in the present day, we know more about the Scriptures than the Fathers, the Reformers, or the Puritans did, it is only to the extent that we have *trusted* theology, and fallen back upon the Book.

The "strong attraction" which scientific theology has for many men may well be admitted, for the wish to systematize our knowledge is probably but a result of the natural constitution of our minds; but it has yet to be shown that Revelation is a proper field for the satisfaction of this desire. Hitherto little beside harm has resulted from its indulgence on this forbidden ground.

Illustrations crowd upon us. The present state of the Church of England; the recent declaration of the Duke of Argyll at the meeting of the Scotch National Bible Society, that "in the Confession of Faith adopted by the Scottish Churches (and signed by her ministers before ordination) there are doctrines laid down *which no man now believes*;" the sad truth, that, in disputes about doctrines—not about revealed facts—divisions

have multiplied and been made permanent; that in *theories about* the atonement, the great fact itself is so often neglected or denied; that a doctrine of the Trinity has so largely usurped the place of the living Father, Son, and Spirit; that the difference between a vital truth and a theological formula is so commonly lost sight of; and that doctrine *about* Christ, instead of Christ Himself, is so frequently regarded as "the power of God unto salvation." These and similar thoughts present themselves in abundance; and if it were the object of the present paper to distinguish a true theology from a false one, or merely to promote a *wiser estimate* of theology as a science, they might with propriety be urged at some length. But it is not so. The question *here* is not between systems "that distort the truth and divide the Church," and some *yet-to-be-framed* system, which shall "honour truth and unite all that believe," but between such systems as we actually possess and *no system at all*.

In a very beautiful passage, too long to quote entire, but eminently worthy of perusal, Professor Rogers speaks of the Bible as "exceedingly complex in its structure, and various in its contents—these last, like those of the material world, existing in seeming glorious confusion." But this very thing, at which so many stumble, he regards as "worthy of the complicated and divers purposes for which it was constructed by them who intended it to be—not simply a perspicuous, logical abstract of the great truths which constitute its essential value as a revelation to guilty man—but an exhibition of those truths in forms in every way adapted to minister to the spiritual wants and aspirations of universal humanity. Its confusion, he observes, is "like that of Eden, where was every tree that was good for food, or that could minister to beauty and delight."

The question naturally suggested by these thoughts is—"Is the confusion spoken of, in itself the most perfect and complete form of revelation, and was the book so arranged or disarranged, in order that each man by himself, "for his own improvement might slowly spell out and piece together the alphabet of that highly complex language in which God's 'manifold wisdom' speaks to us"?—or, was it intended that an order of men, dedicated to theological study, should professionally effect for others "the true extrication and methodical arrangement of the great truths which make up 'the whole counsel of God' *in the order of their importance*, and as inter-connected, and inter-dependent"?"

The latter supposition, however generally entertained, seems to me alike unsupported by Scripture, and discredited by experience. It is admitted that "man is incapable either of determining the *modes* of the Divine existence, or the harmony between Divine prescience and human freedom; it is allowed

that he cannot give the *rationale* of many of the mysterious facts contained in the Bible, or even fully develop its transient glimpses." Is it then less reasonable to insist that he is equally unable "to sum up in generalized truth a precept what we read in Scripture," so as to give, in a more condensed or *definite* form, the substance of inspired teaching on any given point, saying "precisely what Scripture says—neither more nor less"?

What means, then, the constant cry that creeds are *more definite* than the Bible, and have therefore *some advantage* over the Divine record? If it be so, if they do indeed give a more certain sound, the inspiration * under which these summaries were developed, whatever might be its extent or character, must assuredly take precedence of that of the apostles! The sceptic is not slow to perceive this, or take advantage of it. For if other than apostolic men have been able to arrange revealed truth in the order of its importance, and to give it a logical expression in accordance with their own view of what is interconnected and inter-dependent, why should not he also give expression in his own way to whatever commends itself to his "consciousness," and set aside as unimportant whatever may fail to commend itself to his "verifying faculty"? Oh, when shall we come to see that the one question for all us is, the *supremacy of the Book*; its supremacy, not merely as a witness for or against any given system of theology, but its supremacy as a teacher, never to be interfered with,—the one only oracle, to be maintained in all its "glorious confusion"—the wisdom of God and the Eden of the soul.

It now only remains for me to state, as briefly as may be, why I number myself among the "unreasonable" persons who regard all generalized summaries of Divine truth as impertinent and pernicious. I do so—

I. Because, whatever may be their merits or defects, they present to the mind, and emphatically to the young and inquiring mind, a given system or fabric of truth which, being necessarily of human construction, may, for ought we can tell, in generalizing, greatly *misrepresent* the Divine character.

II. Because all theological systems, whether presented in the form of creed or catechism, or embodied in discourse, be they true or false, *co-here*, and therefore demand acceptance as a whole.

III. Because such acceptance, especially in youth, disposes the mind that has been thus pre-occupied, to resist, actively or passively, and often to reject without examination, any view of truth which even *seems* to break in upon, or in any way to

* St. Basil and others quoted with approval by Dr. Williams. "Crit. Appendix upon the Lord Bishop of St. David's Reply," pp. 4 and 5."

endanger the particular fabric under the shadow of which the soul reposes. The *body of thought* accepted, having been received as scriptural, the questioning of any part of it soon comes to be regarded as equivalent to the removal of the key-stone of the arch on which Faith rests.

IV. Because any system received in this form, however defective it may be, rapidly gathers round itself all the holiest and purest associations of the religious life; and consequently, does often make it *really* dangerous to correct error, since the unsettlement of any one point frequently leads to the unsettlement of the whole.

V. Because a mind thus prepossessed is not open, as it ought to be, to that advancement in Divine knowledge which in Scripture is always supposed to follow growth in grace. The progress of such an one in the Divine life may be in many respects real, but it cannot be progress from faith to faith,—light as to the Divine purposes increasing as humility, candour, love, and obedience increase. The revelations of Scripture to such an one are not progressive, but *fixed*; and the soul's chief anxiety is, lest anything should be added to, or taken from, that which is assumed to be Divine.

VI. Because the exaltation of doctrine over life, a necessary consequence of common beliefs *as expressed by man*, being made the bond of Christian fellowship—tends more than anything else to depress spirituality, to foster bigotry, and to lower character. The teaching of *Scripture* is, that only through life in Christ can dogmatic truth be either understood or appreciated; and therefore it is *as a life*, and not as a series of propositions, that the gospel is presented in the Bible. But the implication involved in all creeds and theological systems is, that the right reception of what is called the body of essential truth in its various relations, is a pre-requisite to spiritual life. How likely it is that, under such circumstances, the two should often be regarded as one and the same thing, is obvious enough.

I might say much more. I might speak of the *insincerity* to which a professed adhesion to any given creed in many cases leads; of the mischievous facility all systematic divinity affords to men who undertake to teach and preach long before they have themselves *experienced* the power of the truths they inculcate; of the hindrance *systems* of truth offer, to the reception, by the Church, of any additional light which it may please God in these latter days to vouchsafe, as to the meaning of such portions of Scripture as have been concealed in the past, because specially intended for ourselves. But it is needless. All may be summed up in one word. Either God *has* given us in Holy Scripture an adequate and complete revelation of His will, or He has not.

If He has; if we mean what we say when we affirm that Scripture is the one and only authority before which a Christian man should bow; that every believer, to the extent of his need, and in harmony with his responsibilities, has received "the anointing which teacheth all things;" that the seeming confusion of the Word of God is "glorious;" *then*, in the name of all that is modest or sensible, let us not attempt to improve it by our skill, to make it plainer or more definite by our manipulations, or endeavour after so "impossible a vanety" as to map out a country yet untracked, or to lay down charts of an ocean which no human mariner has ever yet navigated.

HENRY DUNN.

ANTÆUS.

CONSIDERATIONS IN REGARD TO THE POSITION OF THE UNIVERSITIES.

THE question of the Universities and their relation to education in England, has reached that stage, when in Parliament it has become a battle-ground of party, and to the general public interesting. Schemes and projects, some emanating even from Oxford itself, seem, as we gather their purpose and process, to throw us back to very early days indeed in the history of our Universities, and recal their turbulent, vigorous youth. Nor is this an ill-omened sign. The early period of their annals manifested principles far nobler than their later. Their relation to the nation and to education was far more influential, was vital and vivifying to an extent which more recent times have not approached. They had a source of strength, then, which has long failed them. They had a largeness and freedom of scope and action for which we now look in vain. One great fact will come up to any thoughtful mind, in a review of the first era of the development of our Universities, which will be at once explanatory of the past and suggestive of the future. In their foundation and early action *they were in perfect sympathy with the great body of the people, and sought, as the especial end of their constitution, a generous diffusion of knowledge amongst all classes equally.* With the middle and lower portion of the English people their contact was close-living and genial. It was the might of their glorious youth. When they drew away from that vivifying contact they grew puny; they became "cabin'd, cribbed, confined." The truth of the old myth of Antæus is strikingly illustrated in their history. Antæus, giant son of Neptune and

Earth, invincible so long as he touched his mother Earth, but helpless when lifted by Hercules, struggling in the empty air.

In recalling some facts in the early and later history of our Universities, we have in view simply to illustrate this aspect of their relations, and to give prominence to the principle which dominated in their earlier and nobler period, and is again rising into sight.

Education and learning in modern Europe are originally affiliated with the "learned professions," theology and law. Where the old Roman institutions remained and had power, a civilization did, indeed, exist apart from the Church. But generally among the Teutonic peoples scholarship was associated with the Church, when at length we find them emerging into the light of modern history. To every cathedral and monastery was attached a school, chiefly, but not wholly, for training those who were intended for ministering in the Church's offices. In most cases the pupils were drawn from the poorer part of the population. The scions of the aristocracy were mainly engaged in war-like exercises. There were also schools for the towns and villages of an elementary character, where education was given at nominal cost by ecclesiastics. Sometimes, too, a band of teachers, led by some adventurous scholar, would settle in a chosen spot, and gather round them a concourse of peoples. Thus, Joffrid, Abbot of Croyland, sent to his manor of Cottenham, near Cambridge, Master Gislebert, his fellow monk, then Professor of Theology, with three other monks, who had come with him into England. They hired a barn in Cambridge, and there every day taught "*The Humanities*." That was a private venture. It increased, however, until they were obliged to separate into distinct sections and hold distinct lectures. Brother Odo gave lessons in grammar after Priscian and Remigius. Brother Terrieus followed, at one o'clock, on the logic of Aristotle, after Porphyry and Averroes. Brother William began his prelections at three o'clock, on Tully's Rhetoric and Quintilian's Institutions. Master Gislebert knew no English, but was adept in Latin and French, and preached to the people on Sundays in the various churches. There is no regular incorporation here. It is a scholastic adventure, resulting in a scholastic colony or rather mission station. But, saith Peter of Blois, "From this little fountain, which hath swelled into a great river, we now behold the city of God made glad, and all England rendered fruitful, by many teachers and doctors issuing from Cambridge, after the likeness of the holy Paradise." That mission of "*The Humanities*" dates from 1109.

Thus over all England, in a certain unsystematic manne English-wise in fact, such infant colleges were doing such a work that education was a very notable fact among the middle and lower classes of England of the twelfth century.

In Paris, system began to be introduced into such efforts, and a corporation, the embryonic forecast of the University, appears. The Carlovingians long before had founded certain scholastic institutions. But they were premature. In the thirteenth century learning came to its innings; the taste for education became an impulse, all Europe blossomed with flowers of wit, philosophy, classic disquisitions, theologic controversies. The early indications of university life in Bologna and Paris present us with the especial idea in their foundation. They are *Universities*. They are *universal*. They accept all nations as equal in their *studium*. English, French, Italian, are represented in their management. Long after Cambridge and Oxford became famous, students from England thronged the class-rooms of Paris, and were noted for that jollity and display which has not yet departed from college life. Paris was the Athens, the "City of Letters." Great names cast a halo around those halls. Abelard was there, and made the dry stick of scholastic philosophy bloom like Aaron's rod. By-and-by, however, Cambridge and Oxford asserted their eminence. Oxford, in early times, reckoned her scholars as 30,000 in number. Cambridge had a prodigious influx.

Throughout all the incidents and changes of those primitive times of university education, this fact is notable and worthy of being remembered. The very foundations of the Universities are sunk in the general population. From the general population, in a broad undistinguishing fashion, they drew their resources of mind and their crowds of scholars. A very large infusion of a class, which for centuries has just been heard of in our Universities, was then to be found in their halls. Poverty was the rule in those institutions, and freedom, degenerating into mere anarchy. The history of the early times of university life in England has yet to be written, and is worthy of being well written, if only for its amazing exemplification of utter democracy in association with the seat and source of literature, and in those institutions now a by-word for aristocratic exclusiveness and conservative rigidity. Anthony A. Wood characterizes the tens of thousands who, before the foundation of separate colleges, were gathered at Oxford, as beyond all proper control, in some instances disreputable "varlets," pretending to be scholars that they might gain admittance to respectable society. They were wild, profligate, lawless, and addicted to thieving. Then came the era of organization. The statutes of Paris were introduced. The law of *tutors* prevailed. Cap and gown—gown "*down to the heels*"—distinguished the surging throngs of madcap youth. There were "rectors" and "masters" and due proportion of "heads"—with brains in them, let us hope. Still, the abiding places of the students and their halls were very humble, rude

places. Old prints do not glorify them. Luxurious living would not corrupt the manhood there. Muscular Christianity needed no Mr. Kingsley to advocate it. Indeed, poverty seems to have been considered a proper characteristic of such institutions. Rectors, masters, students, all sturdily pleaded poverty. In 1362, in a university case tried at law, a postponement of hearing is asked for that the needful funds might be raised to carry on the suit. Rectors and masters plead that they are of those "whose profession it is to possess no wealth." Yet in connection with these glorious institutions provision was made for permanent maintenance, free of all cost, of the poorest who would participate in the grand boon, education.

Let it be observed also, that this position of the Universities brought on them no contempt, but on the contrary, seemed to bring them nearer to the sympathies of all classes. Nor did the *res angusta domi* hinder the extension of research, or impede the splendid progress of scientific discovery. It is encouraging to all who hold high the sacredness of the voluntary principle in religion, to see how even learning in that old time recognized and trusted it, and was not disappointed in the free, cheerful benefactions of the lovers of knowledge. Roger Bacon must have spent £6,000 in his books, instruments, and experiments. That sum must have come to him from the large-hearted liberality of patrons. And so in a multitude of other instances. Note again—how, out of this almost lawlessness of eager impetuous English life, emanated a wondrous diffusion of the love of letters, and the spirit of free inquiry; how there was cultivated a scholarly taste which influenced the age, and a learning the fruits of which we are reaping now. These institutions became of immense political and social eminence, chiefly because of this broad catholic relation. They were centres of social intercourse. They kept up, through their hospitality and free generous bearing, communication with all nations. They were free of all crafts and burghs. With all their rudeness and lawlessness there is a grandeur and nobility about our Universities as they rise up before us in the days of their vigorous youth. They sunk their foundations deep among the people, and gathered their intellectual wealth and power from all classes alike. Antæus—recurring to our old emblem—Antæus touched his mother Earth, and all his heady insolence, and all the fantastic vagaries of his philosophy, and all his haughty assumptions, did not weaken his influence.

There was a further point of contact with the body of the people which must not be lost sight of. Munificent patrons founded colleges and schools to feed those colleges. In the foundation appointments of the schools care was taken that the

poorest should have admission on such terms as the poor could accept. Thus Henry the Sixth established Eton to feed his college at Cambridge. In Eton there are even now seventy boys on the royal foundation called "Collegers." The school, however, contains eight hundred boys, and these additional scholars, from the best families in England, are called "Oppidans." The "Collegers" are those who take the prizes, Newcastle Scholarship, and all. The "Oppidans" cultivate cricket, rowing, and gentlemanly bearing generally. The intellectual vigour of the school and college thus comes from the lower class. The stuff to work up in the school and college into lawyers, clergymen, and men of general uses, comes not from the crowd of rich and well-born youth who frequent Eton, but from the class which still represents the munificent intent of the founder. The prescience which thus endeavoured at the spring of education to impress a noble community of all positions in the social scale, and saw that the intellectual eminence of the nation should not be left to depend on those whose circumstances supplied no incentive to exertion, is admirable in itself, and worthy of imitation.

Had we space, we should find both interest and profit in tracing out the course by which the Universities lost the profound sympathy with the general body of the population which characterized their earlier history; swerved from the clear purpose of their foundation, and gradually sunk into close aristocratic corporations; held to tradition and precedent, waned from their power and glory. But we can only indicate a few special points.

In 1357, Richard Fitz Ralph, Archbishop of Armagh, in an oration before the pope and cardinals on the state of learning in England, notices that, instead of 30,000 students, Oxford only contained at that time some 6,000. The change was then rapidly ensuing which has resulted in what we see.

The mighty northern intellect—the genius of the new races represented in the Universities in their earliest state, was just then in its first, fresh vigour. With all-devouring appetite it laid hold of that crabbed philosophy—the philosophy which, clustered round Aristotle, had come to us from the Arabs through Paris, and pervaded Europe in the thirteenth century. Thus, dominant in the Universities as *the* study, the subtle metaphysics became the recognized end of teaching and research. Naturally, such institutions would preserve this speciality, even while the world was changing round them. And thus it happened. Industrial, commercial, eager England was surely swinging round into that mighty cycle of enterprise, research, discovery, which was to crown her with a supreme glory. A literature, too, sprung up almost opposed to university tastes—at all events widely divergent. Greek poesy and eloquence kindled a fervour

for other than that of the Aristotelian logic. The printing press came to tempt the general population to read ;—to read books of imagination, adventure, narrative. And thus, whilst the Universities were sounding with jaw-breaking logical inanities, England was urging on with heated steps in the midst of splendid realities, glorious opening hopes, and the bloom of a new fresh realm of thought and inquiry. A great severance was thus inevitable between the people and the Universities. The Universities held to Duns Scotus and the Irrefragable Doctor. The people, like John of Salisbury, laughed and left them.

When the great change came which severed the country from Papal interference, the gulf of separation became far wider. A feeling of hostility also became apparent. The Universities, bitterly opposed to the new faith, and finally accepting the new *régime* with a cold indifference, could not, and did not, sympathize with the immense enthusiasm which surged round them. Already the aristocratic exclusiveness, which has ever since characterized them, had become apparent. Already the rigid conservatism, which is the besetting sin of such institutions, was pressing with leaden weight upon them. So many colleges had been endowed, so many privileges bestowed, so many noble gifts conferred, by monarch, prince, and great ecclesiastics, that we do not wonder that a strong feeling impelled the bias of the Universities in that direction. There was no popular element now to control. Thus, with the Reformation, a positive antagonism arises between them and the great middle class and general population of England. And, as the Reformation developed, and the great Puritan movement went on its way—sweeping with it the larger, far larger, proportion of the religious earnestness, the intellectual vigour, the sound vigorous common sense of England, and affecting the national policy,—still other elements became intermingled in the profound antagonism of which we speak. The years of internecine struggle between King and Parliament *disclosed* the ingrained propensity of the Universities rather than originated any new tendency. Already in the days of Queen Mary, such was the fame of Oxford that Gardiner proposed to remove thither court and parliament; as deeming that there he could work his persecuting will, without let or hindrance, on the holiest and highest—even upon the magnificent young girl, the Princess Elizabeth. The ingrained corruption and utter perversion of these institutions was simply *disclosed* by the troubled times of the great parliamentary struggle. Then Oxford set the new fashion of sealing loyalty to King and Church by swearing, dicing, drinking, and daring profligacy. During all that earlier Stuart time the Universities were held by the High Church and aristocratic faction. It is not exaggeration to say, that to them

might we trace the downfall of the ruling dynasty and the degradation of the Church. For, the men they sent forth to wield the influence of birth and position in public affairs were narrowed, darkened, and dwarfed in soul by prejudice and servile views in politics and religion. The men they sent forth to fill the offices of the Church were generally tainted with the profligacy of university life, blasted in character, and destitute of principle. Many of these are of the crowd who figured in the notorious Kent inquisition and in White's "century." But the Universities could furnish only a few of the number required. Their attendance had sunk very low. To supply the lack, men were taken, not from the sturdy middle-class, which had once been the strength of the University—the class whence Latimer sprung—but from a low and worthless section. They were men who were good for little at any honest calling, but ready to shout lustily for Church and King. If the colleges sent forth any of more earnest strain, they were earnest only, like Laud, in ritualistic formalities. When the struggle between King and Parliament at length came to serried war, Oxford and Cambridge were simply military training schools. They had reached, at that time, their lowest pitch of degradation. In their early days they had swarmed with life, and, in deep sympathy with the body of the people, displayed a titanic vigour and energy. In Henry the Eighth's time, though miserably narrowed, they had been almost the arbiters of the destiny of the nation. In the days of Charles they were simply sources of corruption and weakness.

Unchanged in spirit, the narrow, bigoted faction laid hold of the Universities again at the Restoration, and they fell back into the old grooves from which the wise, free soul of Cromwell had for a time lifted them. A will of unquenchable hatred possessed them toward Nonconformity. They banned it in every way, and shut it out of the Universities by every means. They only impoverished themselves. Strange that the deep, bitter feeling should exist even now; exist among the students of Oxford, and show itself in many ways. "Three cheers for the devil—and the London University!" concludes the saturnalia on the great day in Oxford. Nor is Cambridge much better. A Dissenter may, as a student, retain his principles and adhere to his simple, sober mode of life: but he must bear with him an iron will, and a calm, unshakeable resolution, not to be moved by sneers and taunts and insults.

We cannot pursue our review any further. What the Universities became by their isolation from the people, and how that isolation came about, we have endeavoured to suggest. The further history would only show the same succession, and similar

results, under different phases, and with modifications. Lately, a variety of schemes have been bruited, the general purport of which is to restore to some extent the sympathy and contact between the Universities and the general population: surely a happy omen for the Universities themselves, and pleasant to all who know the influence they can and do exercise. A happy omen for themselves. They are narrowed in scope and aim by their isolation and seclusion. They are left behind in the nation's onward march. They are being distanced by colleges and universities of newer growth and freer action. They are weakened in position, and shorn of power. They have lost, in the public mind, the great *prestige* of clear national purpose of usefulness. It is a poor argument for the existence of a bishop with six thousand a year, or more, that it is worth while to pay so much to have a man set an example of courtesy, urbanity, and all the graces. It is a miserable argument for the Universities that they train gentlemen. Their grandeur and power rested in their best days on public sympathy. By coming nearer to the people once more, and casting away the wretched fetters of tests and subscriptions, and welcoming all, as of old, as UNIVERSITIES—*universal*, they will aggregate for themselves a new power. Let Antæus touch his mother Earth, and invincible might shall clothe him.

RELIGIOUS READING.

IF the number and variety of books upon religious subjects that are recorded as published and purchased represent the number of *bonâ fide* readers—and if the number of readers is a test of the excellency of the reading—and if the excellency of the reading is an earnest of the sympathetic goodness of the readers—then is this most pre-eminently a *religious age*.

It is only necessary to answer these three "ifs" in the affirmative, and then a glance down the advertising columns of many of our periodicals will convince the most despairing that this is certainly the truth. But before we can reach so pleasant a conclusion, we must first dispose of a few queries.

What does the "rapid and extensive sale" of a work denote? and is this the only or the chief test of worth?

The extensive sale shows most assuredly that the book meets the taste of a large portion of the public, though not perhaps to

the extent that the given numbers would, at first, seem to imply. It must be remembered that all bought books do not become "read books," neither are all that are read "approved of" by the reader.

There are also many minor things, that, as adjuncts to the intrinsic worth of a book, are not only desirable in themselves, but useful as aids to the sale, and aids which no wise author would neglect to employ. There is the pleasantness of the personal appearance of the book; it looks well on the drawing-room table. Perhaps its size, moderate price, and easy transmission through book-post suggest its suitability for a present. Its title is most likely alliterative, or rhythmical, or forcible. Then there are the wide-spread advertisement and the programme of contents that excite curiosity to see how the topics named will be treated; and last, but not least, there are the numerous "short commendatory notices" so satisfactory to those who trust them.

But when all allowance has been made for these subsidiary helps, there will yet remain the fact that a great number of people buy, read, and admire, and recommend these publications.

And why? The works under present consideration are upon religious subjects, written by grave and good men, and with the express intention of "doing good." Surely, then, if these have a wide circulation, it must be because they are really good, and because the readers really enjoy goodness of this sort.

The only objection to this answer is—that it is simply impossible to maintain it.

"Extensive sale," is not the only or the chief test that must be applied to a work, in judging of its excellency.

A book that deserves to be called "good" (be the subject what it may) should impress the mind with a sense of completeness. Be it short, or long, on a large subject, or on a small part of one, it should be of itself and in itself "a whole," or "that which has beginning, middle, and end;" and to produce the effect of the wholeness, there must be evident signs of a *definiteness of aim* and of a *concentration of means*.

Now it is precisely on these essential points that so many religious books fail. Say, for the purpose of something like specification, that large class of small treatises of which "The Pathway of Promise," and many of the shorter works of the Rev. Octavius Winslow, may serve as fair average types.

The perusal of a book of this order often leaves with the reader a most painful sense of incompleteness and indefiniteness. The book is felt to be all "middle," or "that which supposes and necessitates something before, and something after." It is not "a whole."

Then, again, it is often very difficult to say with certainty what especial subject, or part of one, the writer is wishing to bring before his reader. It is not enough that he should see it clearly; he must make it clear to others. But this *definiteness* is not so easily attained, as some might imagine, and in the departments of religious thought there are very many writers and readers who never reach it.

It requires a sharp incisive power of mind to be able to choose out, mark round, and carefully separate any one particular phase of truth or subject from the whole mass of truths with which it is connected; and having thus detached it, it needs a certain tenacity of mind to be able to cling steadily to it and devote yourself to its service for the time being, not forgetting its relative position, nor enticed from its individual consideration by the nearness of kindred but adjoining topics. Many persons seem to seize hold of religious truth in the lump, and to grasp it, as it were, with the palms instead of the fingers, and are afraid to open the hand, or in any way to relax their hold, lest they should drop the whole. The mental sense of touch, like the physical, requires training. With infants and uneducated persons, the one is uncertain, insecure, clumsy; and so with the mental sense, unless carefully disciplined, its efforts will be indiscriminative and unskilful, the finer nerves of sensation will be undeveloped, and consequently everything grasped will be held as at first in the mass, and all the beauties and differences of configuration and texture must remain undiscovered.

Yet none but those whose every sense is exercised by use, can discern even between good and evil, much less can they "rightly divide" the word of truth for the good of others. For all grand truths are crystalline in character, and have this property of the crystal, that if *rightly divided*—that is, along the lines of cleavage, each separate part, no matter how minute, is likewise a crystal, beautiful even as the whole. But if random blows are struck, and inartistic efforts at division made, then loose powder and shapeless pieces can alone be the result. Perhaps it is owing to this indiscriminating *touch* that so much of the religious thought, brought before the public is vague, muddled, desultory.

There is yet another test which should be applied to books claiming the verdict "good," and that is, the evidence of a "Concentration of Means." • It is certainly desirable to have a *definite* subject; it is a very good thing to have plenty of thoughts upon it, but it is a much better thing to be able to manage and arrange the thoughts, be they few or many.

A smaller force in the hands of a skilful general, one who

knows how to "deploy" his men, will often do more execution than a much larger number under a man who is not a clever tactician. Thus a few thoughts, well generalised, will produce more result than a multitude of unarranged ones.

But it is not always that we are able to see the signs of this good generalship—or to feel that the ground has been critically surveyed, and the forces cleverly disposed along the lines of attack and defence. We seldom can hear the steady, onward march of disciplined thoughts towards a destined end; and rarely are we impressed with the conviction, that though the army brought into the field may be large, yet the writer has still a band of side thoughts and reserve arguments, close at hand though not in sight.

Instead of all this, the thoughts in many cases seem to be just tossed out of the mind and thrown down upon the paper, and as they fall so they are allowed to lie; hence the disorder, the repetition, the remarkable homogeneity of the several parts.

In an old work of Sibbs' there stands a chapter with this *naïve* heading, "Other observations of the same nature," and really this would be a most appropriate and descriptive title, in many books, for section after section. There is so little progression of thought, so little of special adaptation—that if the titles, headings of chapters, texts explanatory and hymns confirmatory, could be run down into a common mould, and then divided again into separate portions, on the principle of a little of everything to each, the resulting compounds would not greatly differ from the originals. The experiment might be worth trying—it would certainly be amusing, and ought to be instructive.

This "Concentration of Means to an End"—implies both selection and rejection, and these suppose number and variety of materials; and these materials will consist of special knowledge and special faculties. Any one who intends to present the world with the result of his cogitations should be fully persuaded in his own mind that he has observed much, thought much, and felt much with reference to his proposed work. The necessary largeness of this *much* will greatly depend upon the nature of his topic. An ordinary amount of observation and thought and feeling does not qualify a man to teach his fellow-men if the subject is one on which all men, or at least a great number, think and feel and talk and write with more or less of power and effect. Especially is this the case in almost all the branches of religious thought. These are patent to so many minds, have been canvassed by so many intellects, have been seething and fermenting for so many centuries in the fiery furnace of the great human heart, out of which the burning, hissing drops have bubbled up and over, and been condensed in so many and

varied modes of expression, that he who ventures to think he can add aught to these accumulated stores, had need be well assured that his materials, his knowledge and experience, were superior to those of his fellow-men, and such as specially fit him for the task of instruction.

One element of his preparedness will be, an extensive *acquaintance* with the thoughts and feelings of other men on his chosen subject; for, other things being equal, he will write with the greatest originality who has the most closely studied and thoroughly appreciated that which has been already said.

This power of appreciation is like the quality of mercy, it "is twice blessed." It blesses him to whom it is given by making him humble, and it blesses his fellow-creatures by preserving them from much unnecessary teaching.

But there are some subjects that lie partly beyond the spheres of observation and experience—the two great sources of our knowledge. They belong to the realm of probability and conjecture, and he who essays to touch them ought to be very sure that he is provided with certain faculties, such as the keen perception of analogies, their weakness and strength; instinctive insight into the real as differing from the apparent, into the fact as wrapped up in the figure: he should possess strong sympathies, a nature all vibrant through its every fibre to the harmonies of earth and heaven. Such faculties and such a nature, in short, as belong to the Poet and the Prophet—the "eyes before and behind" of exalted spiritual intelligence.

But how few of the writers on subjects of this class can be said to be thus provided with "materials." Of all the books upon religious topics, are there any that are so remarkable for vagueness and diffuseness as those which have relation to the unseen world? Take, for example, the three works by the same author "Life in Heaven," "Meet for Heaven," "Heaven our Home." Can any one, even through courtesy, credit these books with any signs of the faculties just mentioned, and which all will admit are essential? They do not even impress us with the belief that the writer has the power to appreciate the greatness and the grandeur of the Bible words, or the Bible silences. Surely a vivid apprehension of the passion and pathos and purity of the Bible records, would have almost rendered the production of anything so dry, prosaic, meagre in conception, and loose and feeble in execution, an impossibility. Can anything be less graphic than the pictures, more rapid than the "conversations"? It is bad enough to make our Milton talk feebly to the Saints, considering what powerful words he could use when he talked to his fellow-men; but to put such poor weakly talk into the mouth of that grand Eastern Job, with that rich tropical, burning

nature of his; to place such inanities side by side with his intense fiery words, is such a terrible breach of the truth of *fitness*, as positively angers one to read. "Job's words were inspired"—true, but the magnificent old Arab Prince could never, in his dullest moments and darkest days, have been guilty of such platitudes; much less after he had sunned himself for many years in the warmth and glory of the new Jerusalem. Surely the writer of these volumes must have lacked the necessary special faculties.

All that pertains to the unseen world and to ourselves in reference to it, except in a few leading particulars, lies confessedly out of the region of *the known*. It is the problem that is yet waiting to be solved—the enigma that remains yet unanswered,—and it is only through the "glass darkly" that aught can be seen. But there are shadows of figures cast upon the glass—there are data to the problem, and defining terms to the enigma; and he will present us with the best picture, and make the most successful "guess," who can the most carefully trace the shadows, the most clearly understand the data, and the most distinctly apprehend the terms. True it is after all only a "guess;" but the guesses of the man of genius of times contain the embryo truth that "the progress of the suns" developes and matures; for as Dr. J. Brown says, speaking of "happy guessing" in reference to the medical profession, "He will guess best, most happily for himself and his patients, who has the greatest amount of true knowledge and the most serviceable amount of mental cash—ready money and ready weapons."

Why is it that we cannot successfully deal with the beautiful, the fair, the calm, the sinless, and the heavenly? It is seldom that men unite strength with goodness in their portraitures, or depict beauty without admixture of feebleness—repose without suspicion of lethargy and weariness.

The strongest part of a poem or work of art of any kind will be found to be that which treats of the terrible and the sinful, of action and of contest. Milton, with all his great goodness, is more grand and powerful when his genius wrestles with the Devil and draws the horrors of the "Stygian pool," than when he visits heaven and tries to tell us what God is like. And Dante succeeds better in opening the Inferno to our horrified gaze than in describing the glories of the Paradiso. He is evidently more at home with his "beloved Master," pagan though he be, in the circles of pain and darkness, than in the realms of light and bliss, with even his glorified Beatrice for a guide.

It seems to require a different order of intellect to any that has yet risen above our horizon to enable us to be as strong in the one department as in the other. The weakness lies, not in

the nature of the theme, but in one common inability to grapple with it.

To say that this is so because we are all by nature sympathetic to the sinful excitements of earth, and alien to the holy peacefulness of heaven, is by no means to offer a solution of the matter, satisfactory as the answer appears to be to many people. The question still remains open.

Were it possible to us to read the Bible with the freshness and wonderment that would belong to a *first voluntary* reading of it, and to be denuded of all ideas gained from hymns, early training, teachings of commentaries, &c., we much doubt whether our usual and early conceptions about heaven would be found to be very correct ones. Grand ones they certainly are not.

The ideas of repose and of constant acts of worship are not, we venture to assert, the exclusive or even the prominent ones which would be gathered from such a fresh unbiassed study of the different visions related by the sacred writers, more especially of that most wonderful, pictorial, allegorical dream of St. John, called "The Revelation."

We use the term "Dream" with no shadow of irreverence, but simply because it is so applicable. For to those of us who are outside, who are not in the mind of the Seer, who can only listen as he tells us what he hears and what he sees—these visions have all the incompleteness and the incoherence of the dream; and are like dreams moreover in this, that there enters into them that strange mingling of the actual and the known with the ideal and the unknown—that strange carrying into another sphere of the thoughts, ideas, and impressions upon eye and ear, mind and character, which have been derived from things in common earthly life, which invariably accompany a dream.

Just as the kaleidoscope patterns of our common dreams, various as they may be, are almost always made up from the several bits of our daily life, the elements the same, the combination being the only thing that is new and strange; so in these grand visions of our mighty spiritual masters, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and John the divine—beheld by them as they stood on the border line of the present and the future, the old and the new, the earth and the heaven—there may be traced the influences excited by the time and country in which they lived, the particular views and distinctive feelings derived from the sacred polity and religious organization of the nation to which they belonged. The light by which alone the vision could be possible came direct enough from heaven, but the glass through which it passed was by no means achromatic.

But to return—Is not the main impression left on the mind after a careful continuous reading of the Bible visions, revelations,

this, that there is in heaven strong excitement, ceaseless work, daring, united, energetic action? Are there not signs that in this 'other world,' those same qualities of strength and power, courage and endurance, are called into exercise, the manifestation of which quickens the pulse, and animates the heart, and nerves the muscle of every fresh healthy soul? One can even hear, sounding along those golden streets, the silver-trumpet note of fame—

"That spur that the clear spirit doth raise
To scorn delights and live laborious days."

True, there are also displayed the other attributes of peace and rest, beauty and ease. There are the sunny plains, and the clear water, and the healing leaves—beauties for the eye, harmonies for the ear; but all these are but as the pastoral introduced into the "War March," the interlude between the noise and the storm, and the confusion, and the garments rolled in blood of the battle, and that not of earth but of heaven—they come in but as the "purling, limpid brook" *after* the "raging and foaming billows."

It is the contrast of these elements of the terrible and the peaceful that gives the charm to the latter; it is the *union* of the two that makes the picture so wondrously grand.

Speculate on the former class without the aid of the latter, dwell upon the one to the exclusion of the other, and there will of necessity result a painful and horrible, or a *weak* and feeble representation of heaven.

Whatever may be the cause, it is a widely acknowledged fact that a large part of our literature relative to "the other state" is feeble and emaciated. It seldom kindles enthusiasm, or provokes ardent anticipation. It not unfrequently wearies and disgusts. Surely it would be wise to find out why this is so.

There are many good people who decidedly object to adverse remarks being made upon books or persons that are very pious in their character. With them the *piety* shields, if it does not sanctify, the poverty. To criticise, to laugh at word or phrase, to discover and comment upon any absurdity or incongruity, is to them almost the same thing as ridiculing the truth, or condemning the statement, or despising the feeling. With such people the critic is always a cynic—the satirist invariably the scoffer. It is as dangerous to indulge in humour, in their presence, as in the presence of downright enemies to religion. Neither class will discriminate between things that differ; and the one is likely to trample upon some precious truth that the other holds as quite distinct from the garb in which it appeared, the other most probably will turn and rend the criticiser.

But surely to have poor, meagre conceptions of the higher

elements of truth, and to be blundering and inefficient in the translation of them into concrete forms—whatever be the chosen vehicle of transmission, whether art, music, or language—is to render far more injury to the cause of universal truth than would be done had we contented ourselves with less ambitious thought and effort. A man who paints the interior of a cottage without taste and skill and truth, does a wrong deed; but he who ventures to bring poverty of conception and crudity of execution to such a subject as the Crucifixion, does an infinitely worse one, and the injury to the cause of truth in art is incomparably greater.

A bad polka is, as far as it goes, a bad thing; but a vicious piece of music, aspiring to the dignity of an opera or an oratorio, does far more towards vitiating the taste and lowering the standard of musical excellence.

Therefore, religious books, seeing that they deal with the highest order of truths, so far from being exempt, should receive the severest criticism, should be subjected to the most rigid and pains-taking censorship.

They aspire to great things—great things shall be demanded from them. Let all reviewers and critics look to it that they do their duty on such books with extra care, for great and heavy is their responsibility.

The mischief done by weak religious reading is incalculable. The tone of requirement is lowered, and consequently the character of the supply. Authors are like the rest of the commercial world; if the public will be content with inferior goods, inferior goods will be supplied. Then the effect on the reader is still more miserable; for if a writer thinks little, his reader will think less. The amount of *lazy reading* "done" by busy people is wonderful. It is not of so much consequence when the only object is amusement, but otherwise it is most injurious; it makes us deceive ourselves and others; it fosters a superficial, unquestioning, uncaring habit of considering truth: and as a necessary result the power to use thought is weakened, and when that is effected the religion is apt to become a sort of hysterical, semi-imbecile affection of the heart alone, instead of being the united energetic work of heart and soul and mind.

All that tends to sever intellect from emotion, the head from the heart, strength from goodness, sins against the majestic oneness of truth, and so far makes common cause with the arch-enemy.

It is strange to notice the way in which religious people sometimes appear to undervalue *mental* goodness. They seem almost to forget that mental light, strength, vigour, power are gifts coming from the Father of Light, and that when cultivated in His light they help to bring our natures into communion with

the Creator of our spirits. To think or speak of the very highest given intellect, as bringing the recipient into anything like community of feeling, fellowship, with the Great Intellect, may seem almost irreverent, but is not really so when rightly considered.

True it is, that there can be no intellectual approach without having first gone through the narrow gate of moral and spiritual regeneration, and also equally true that there may be close moral communion with scarcely any mental effort. Yet it is unquestionable that in *both* ways, through the intellect and through the heart, a created human spirit may draw *near* to God, and that God may draw near to the thinker as most surely He does to the humble petitioner.

When this drawing near takes place, there will always be tokens left upon the mind thus honoured. As the writer, in the *Christian Spectator*, upon the 14th chap. John says,—“When God shines in upon a man’s intelligence, his thinking will be orderly, progressive, conclusive; consequently *valuable*.”*

Let us see to it that our religious reading is not done merely to pass away the time; the “good book” taken up because it is the proper thing to do on Sunday hours. Let us take care that it be of such a kind as will teach and train, strengthen and animate, as well as soothe and comfort, or perhaps be-dull us. Our reading needs not be much in quantity. Perhaps a little is better than a great deal.

Let us *think* while we read, and as we think over one good book, ere we are aware, the thought will resolve itself into aspiration, and the aspiration will condense itself in prayer. Such religious reading as produces this effect will deserve the name, for it will have sent heart and mind, thought and feeling, in holy brotherhood to the very gate of Heaven.

A. C.

ON MIRACLE.

It seems a pity that—owing to the feeling we have that reducing things to law separates them from their immediate relation to God—there arises a perpetual opposition (felt more or less distinctly by most men, if not by all) between science and religion; at least between science and religion in its emotional, if not in its theological aspects. The perpetually recurring difficulty about prayer, brought of late into so great a

* We quote from memory, but if the words are not quite accurate, we know the sentiment is so; for it is one of those that at once settle down in heart and mind as acknowledged truths, and which cannot be easily removed.

prominence, illustrates, while it also establishes, the fact of this opposition. It may seem easy to remove the difficulty by the affirmation that the laws of nature are themselves a direct expression of the divine activity ; but, if we may judge by results, this solution is for the majority of people rather verbal than real. To me it appears that the view last suggested truly contains the key that is needed, but that it co-exists, at least in the minds of many, with certain other ideas which prevent their applying it efficiently.

These ideas also appear to be very intimately connected with the doctrine of the miraculous, for the miracle—the essential character of which is that it is at least an apparent suspension of the laws of nature,—stands before us (who believe in miracles) as a special exhibition of the divine energy. We can hardly help feeling, that in a miracle God comes nearer to us, that it is an event in which something that otherwise intervenes between Him and ourselves is put aside. Thus, to our feeling the miraculous becomes the specially divine, which is the same thing as to say that the non-miraculous is to a certain extent not divine. Nor does it avail, that in our reflective moments, we repudiate this conclusion ; we do but create a discord within ourselves, unless we can also clearly account for the origin of the feeling we repudiate. The strongest natural impression will become the servant of a thought that can interpret it ; the weakest absolutely refuses to be suppressed.

I venture to think, therefore, that a really hearty acceptance of the teaching of science on the part of religious men,—and what is, perhaps, even of more consequence, a cessation of the feeling on the part of men of science, that religious men cannot accept its teaching, depend in a very great degree,—upon an advance in one conception in respect to miracle.

And thus : the miracle (all will probably allow) is designed to reveal to us the fact of God's presence and operation. Let us ask ourselves, then, How does God reveal Himself ? How has He done so ? How, so far as we can conceive, must He do so ? The answer surely is in each case plain. To reveal His heart and life, He emptied Himself, and took part in our infirmities. He revealed Himself by (so to speak) putting aside infinitude ; making Himself less, that to us He might be more. Nay, how should He do otherwise to come within the range of vision so contracted, a heart so narrow ? For us to see God, the infinite must become finite, the perfect submit to imperfection, the untamptable struggle with temptation.

It is by a limitation God is revealed. Rather, He withdraws Himself, than brings His infinite closeness nearer, when He would have us feel His presence ; puts barriers between us rather

than casts them down when He would have us,—not touch Him, indeed—but know that we touch Him. As between the infinite light and the darkness of our eye, the more is less, the less is more; it is when the noontide fades into the evening we can look upon the sun. This is surely true under every aspect; infinitude is practically inapprehensible by us. Let that which is constant cease, and its existence is perceived; that which is all-pervading be partially withdrawn, and our consciousness is evoked. The bearing of this on miracle is evident. We may well allow that the Divine action excels ours, not only in magnitude, but in character. In ours, necessity is wanting; nay, we cannot, without a certain difficulty, conceive it present without abolishing our agency. In God's action it is not so; necessity does not exclude His agency, but stamps it as Divine.

This lesson, science, if it do not really exclude God from nature, emphatically teaches us; but God's action, which includes among its characters necessity (that which we have been taught to call law) how should it *appear* to us to be His? It is too much for us; too all pervading—too divine. In it we live and move and have our being; we cannot put it away from ourselves, point to it as at a distance, and say—"Behold, there is God!" Embraced and buried in it, as in the all-surrounding air, we seek for tangible proof of it in vain; we cry with Job, "Oh that I knew where I might find Him!" "Behold, I go forward, but He is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive Him. On the left hand where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him: He hideth Himself on the right hand, that I cannot see Him."

It is a cry that God has heard poured forth in passionate complaints from thousand human lips, or more pitifully acted on knees bent down to idols or to Mammon. The prayer has entered into the ears of the Lord God of Hosts; it has sunk into His heart. He has made manifest His action. How?—by coming nearer?—by doing more? Ah, foolish heart, that would think so of God, and thus fill its own path with darkness! How should an activity that is everywhere, reveal itself; a power which is never absent within us or without, be made palpable to us as a thing apart? There is but one way: it must be made less; for a moment, for a point, withdrawn. Then we perceive it—an action to which necessity is wanting, a miracle; an action arbitrary, like our own, the not-divine.

In a word, the miracle is not more divine than the course of nature, yet it truly reveals God. It is God (so to speak) becoming for our sakes less divine,—emptying Himself, exhibiting Himself as sharing the imperfection of our action, that we may see Him; that we may perceive "that is AN ACT," recognizing it

as an action like our own. God shares, in miracle, the imperfection of our action; as, in Christ, He shows Himself, sharing the imperfection of our being. So He reveals himself; but, truly, not as in a special act; but as everywhere and for ever acting: the All-doer; save, indeed, where our arbitrariness comes in, and He is not. Yes, truly, God reveals Himself in the miracle, as in His Son, by accepting imperfections.

There is an analogy to this thought (as surely to all true thoughts) so close and exact, that it would be hardly just to the subject to leave it unmentioned. The air surrounds us, presses on us at every point, and because of this absoluteness of its presence, is unperceived; but let it be partially withdrawn—a vacuum made, and we perceive an action; apparently the action (the suction) of the vacuum, but in truth not so, it is the all-surrounding pressure we perceive. The vacuum brings to our consciousness for a moment, and at a point, the ever-present all-pervading air; its pressure is presented to our apprehension in this inverted form. Naturally we think of it as a special act; but when we recognize it as a special absence, the whole truth stands clear.

Blessed be God, that by miracles He has taught us to know that He doth act. More blessed, that His action is not in the miracle, but in that ever-constant order, the necessity of which has its root in Love, its uniformity in Holiness. More blessed, that He has given us the privilege, not of beholding miracles—even though we “ate bread and were filled”; nay, though we received our dead raised to life, as even night is beautiful with stars—but, of witnessing in the silent unfolding of the great law before us, by new, even though as yet unconscious prophets, the proof that all things are of Him. What, if dawn banishes from sight—nay, almost from belief, the nightly glory of the heavens? It is the sun arising.

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THE PERSONIFICATION OF NATURE.

THE tendency to conceive of the forms and influences of nature, as possessing personal attributes, is as old as human thought. We find it alike in the traditions and myths of the ancients, and in the poetry and speculative philosophy of the moderns. Under various modifications we can trace it through all ages. In the absence of religious and scientific truths, it has clothed itself in the fables of paganism or the legends of superstition.

Under conditions of greater enlightenment, it has re-appeared in the visions of imagination or the subtleties of abstraction.

We are all conscious of the influence which the objects and elements of nature have upon our feelings and thoughts. Gleaming sunshine, drizzling rain, mountain breezes, still lakes, awake in us the responsive moods of joy, depression, energy, or pensiveness. As the ideal preponderates, the sympathy becomes greater, and the process is easy of attributing these emotions to personality that realizes itself the emotions it imparts to us. Thus nature comes to be regarded as possessed of consciousness, in virtue of which she can commune with the spirit of man. This is direct personification. Or by a greater exercise of imagination, invisible beings are conceived having natures which accord with the impressions communicated by the natural aspects of the regions they are supposed to haunt. This is indirect personification. These forms have a contemporary existence, both in grave beliefs and in elegant fancies, in superstition and in poetry. We purpose illustrating, in this paper, some of the phases which the personification of nature has assumed, and considering that correspondence between human emotions and natural appearances which has so universally suggested it.

The mythologies of Heathendom, originating as they mostly do in the youth of nations, partake of that wondering, dreamy, imaginative spirit, which pervades the early life of a people as well as of an individual. Conceived, moreover, by those who had lost the knowledge of the spirituality of the Deity, they would naturally embody mainly the ideas suggested by the material world. Traditions of divinely-communicated truths would also receive a colouring from the earth-contemplating and poetic minds through which they passed. Thus imagination, confined to earthly forms, would produce that personification of nature which is so prominent in all mythologies. The wild legends of Keltic and Gothic tribes, and the beautiful lore of Greece and Rome—the ancient myths of China, India, Persia, and Egypt, and the red man's tales that are chanted in the pine-forests of the far-west—alike endue with consciousness both the repose and the restlessness of nature.

The sites which the Divinities of Classical Mythology were supposed more especially to inhabit, possessed such characteristics as would suggest the attributes of the Gods and Goddesses by which they were imagined to be tenanted. Parnassus might be readily conceived to be the abode of the Muses, Apollo and Bacchus. Its lofty heights would tempt the flight of song. Its whispering groves were rich with music. Its shades would softly fall round all the worshippers of reflective art. Through its lengthening valleys, and from its far-seeing summit, the

arrows that pierced futurity might fly. Under its vine-clad base revelry could indulge. On Olympus, Jupiter would fitly hold his court. In the eternal spring of its heaven-reaching top, the Deities could happily reign. In its cool grottos and under its sheltering woods, might the earthly and the heavenly hold converse. Tempe, down whose slope Peneus softly murmured, fringed by groves, jubilant with the sweetest songs of birds, and embowering winding mossy paths, might well tempt the Gods to wander forth. On the fair summit of Ida, amidst streams that sparkled with joy as they rushed to spread their beauty over the glorious world beneath, Paris could appropriately award the prize to Venus.

The transformations with which Classical Mythology abounds afford further illustrations. The sea is calm, not a murmur is heard, not a ripple is seen. And the fable is not an unnatural one, which accounts for the gentle repose, on the ground that Alcyone and her husband, changed into birds, are building their nests in the distant deep.

"Non tepidum ad solem pennas in litore pandunt
Dilectæ Thetidi Alcyones."

But, far away their loving spirits and their tender work are imparting peace to the ocean. Arethusa, retreating from the lustful desires of Alphæus, is transformed into a fountain. To the poetic Greek, the white spray of a fountain might well suggest the veil of a virgin, and its glistening drops sparkle with the radiance of her bright eyes. Niobe, rejoicing in her many sons and daughters, sees them suddenly destroyed by Apollo and Diana, and from the stupor of her grief passes into a stone. Well may the dull, impassive stone awake the conception of a sorrow too great for utterance, and too absorbed to be affected by outward influences. Look at that rock, black with the many midnights of storm that have gathered round it, fretted into strange outlines by the ceaseless chafing of the waves!—it may be easily imagined that it is the transmuted form of the sea-monster that threatened Andromeda with destruction. Not exactly a transformation is that afforded by the story of the river Parthenius, according to which the purity and softness of its waters were due to the virgin (*παρθενος*) Diana having washed in it.

The supernatural beings of Mythology, by the qualities ascribed to them, testify to this personification of nature. The satyrs, with their half-human, half-beast-like form, might have originated in looking at nature as affording both sustenance for the unreasoning animal and suggestions for the thinking man. Pan, the chief of the Satyrs, may have had his existence, not

from the foul legend which associates him with Penelope, but from the conception of the general vitality of nature. The nymphs, whose graceful forms glided through groves, bounded over mountain peaks, tripped through winding valleys, and floated upon all waters, were but manifold embodiments of the idea of beauty which nature suggests in all the infinite variety of her aspects. Very different in character were the blood-born Eumenides, in whose fearful mien, dark gory garments, serpent-wreathed head, burning torch, and scorpion whip, we have symbols of the misery, destruction, and despair which not only sinful man but nature also, in her fierce and evil moods, presents.

Further illustrations of our subject are furnished by the superstitions and fancies of the middle-ages. In the misty dawn which marked the break of Christian day after the long, dark, Heathen night, strange phantoms flitted before men's half-opened eyes. Amidst these forms, bred of ancient fears and passing dreams, we can still detect the personification of nature. To the mediæval imagination there were mysterious and awful beings, dwelling in each wild natural region. But each of these beings in character accorded well with the locality haunted. The dark Gothic forest, the frowning mountain pass, the falling water with its mystical echoes, the sleeping lake across whose mirror surface unearthly shadows swept—suggested creatures either terrible and powerful, or seductive with wiles and enchantments. Collins, in his *Ode on the Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland*, refers to some of these ideal beings, and the influences supposed to be exerted by them over the domestic life and pastoral pursuits of the people. A hapless peasant describes himself therein as "drowned by the Kelpie's wrath." Such fancies might easily originate amidst scenery like that of the Highlands of Scotland, where mountain crags peer forth from the mists, like the weird faces of old and evil powers, and where in solemn lonely glens the echoing roar of the torrent, and the shriek of the eagle, might well be taken for murmurs and cries from the spirit-world. In the same poem it is affirmed of the seers of the North, that—

"For them the viewless forms of air obey;
Their bidding heed, and at their beck repair :
They know what spirit brews the stormful day;
And heartless, oft like moody madness, stare
To see the phantom train their secret work prepare."

The powers here attributed might be readily supposed to be possessed by those who, far removed from the world of human action, listened in silent awe to the great voices of the storm, sat in the solemn shadows of the vast pillars of nature's temple, and saw mysterious lights in the clear Northern sky. In this instance the ideas of preternatural power and unearthly knowledge, which

a wild, lonely mountain region awake, are accorded, not to mythical personages but to the actual inhabitants.

The witches who figure so largely in the legends of those ages are always surrounded by appropriate circumstances and scenery. They ride forth with forks of lightning for broomsticks, and thunder-clouds for cloaks. Thus, it is amidst the horrors of Walpurgis-night that Mephistopheles bids Faust to listen to the witches' magic song. Equally appropriate to her character is the question of the witch to her sister witches in Macbeth :

" When shall we three meet again,
In thunder, lightning, or in rain ?"

But let us pass into the more inviting realms of fairyland proper—

" To dreamful wastes where footless fancies dwell,
Among the fragments of the golden day."

The fairies who originally played their parts as the *Dii minores* of ancient Northern Mythology, ceased not their fantastic tricks even when Christianity had banished the religion of Odin and Thor. As old and pleasant fancies, they were clung to with more than half belief through all the middle ages. Their legends were distilled into wondering children's ears by our quaint old mothers with simple faith. The signs of their presence were recognized in fungus growths by rude peasants. Domestic mishaps were attributed to their pranks by prudent housewives, who never could themselves have erred in the ordinary course of nature. Poets' songs tripped to the measure of their airy feet. Grave philosophers discussed their entities; and even now, when the poor fairies have lost for ever their ancient status, we still allow them a fugitive gipsy-sort of life at the earnest instance of our little ones, who plead with eager eyes and fervent words for the lives and liberties of the privileged people of fairyland. Who would banish the gauzy, silvery forms that have their hour upon the pantomimic stage? Who would blot out the fairy legends and pictures of our story-books? Who would wish never to hear the old fables told again by the lips of wondering little prattlers? Who, however deeply he may have drunk of the realism and practicalness of our age, would bring cruel science, with its analysis and synthesis, to bear upon these little "atomies"? Who would not rather sing with Victor Hugo?

" Que ce soit Urgele ou Morgane,
J'aime, en un rêve sans effroi,
Qu'une fée au corps diaphane,
Ainsi qu'une fleur qui se fane,
Viennne pencher son front sur moi."

There can be little doubt that fairies are ancient embodiments suggested by the minute and delicate forms and playful moods

of nature. In Shakspeare's description of Queen Mab's carriage, all that is exquisitely tender and beautiful in nature is made to render its tribute to the fittings of the fairy chariot. The dreamy moonlight is moulded to a shape. The gossamer wing, the slender web-line, and the yet more delicate film, have appropriate offices assigned to them. Oberon, the fairy king, describes thus where his royal spouse, Titania, slumbers :—

" I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlip, and the nodding violet grows ;
Quite over-canopied with lush wood-bine,
With sweet musk roses and with eglantine ;
There sleeps Titania, some time of the night,
Lulled in these flowers with dances and delight ;
And there the snake throws his enamell'd skin,
Weed-wide enough to wrap a fairy in."

The sweetest and fairest of florets, as they here supply the couch of her fairy majesty, may also have afforded the conception of a beauteous being who could repose on their soft bloom, and inspire the essence of their fragrance. The fairies are, for the most part, a joyous and gentle race, at whose birth all the graceful and tender influences of nature assisted. Even of naughty Robin Goodfellow we may say—

" Those that Hobgoblin call you and sweet Puck,
You do their work, and they shall have good luck."

But we now leave the personifications of nature furnished by mythology and superstition for those of imaginative literature. As Mrs. Browning has beautifully said,—

" Earth outgrows the mythic fancies
Sung beside her in her youth ;
And those debonnaire romances,
Sound but dull beside the truth.
Phœbus' chariot-course is run,
Look up Poets to the sun—
Pan is dead."

Allegory is a species of personification of nature, in which no element of belief enters, but imagination alone operates, guided, of course, by natural suggestions. Spenser's description of the marriage of the Medway and the Thames, affords a fine illustration of the use of this figure. Drayton's *Polyolbion* is a remarkable specimen of allegorical writing. But it is rather from those abundant embodiments of the aspects and objects of nature, which are to be found in poetry standing out in distinct beauty, than from complicated allegories, that we will derive our illustrations. We must not, however, omit to notice how, in Spenser's exquisite personification of the Seasons, the epithet "lusty" applied to Spring, the description of Summer's "unlined" cassock,

the representation of Autumn as laughing at having banished hunger, and of Winter as chattering his teeth, form admirable touches, not only as characterizing essentially the seasons, but as aiding the conception of personality. The general aspects of the year have always been favourite subjects for the personifying genius of poets. Gracefully does Milton present

“The flowery May, who from her green lap throws,
The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.”

while an American Poet sings of

“The delicate-footed May,
With its slight fingers full of leaves and flowers.”

The summer heats awake more fervent strains, and she is coming

“With her flashing eyes,
And her cheek of passion's hue,
'Mid a train of ærial symphonies,
In a garment of cloudless blue.”

In Chatterton's verse, Autumn is “bleak and sunburnt.”

“With his gold hand gilding the falling leaf,
Bringing up Winter to fulfil the year,
Bearing upon his back the reaped sheaf.”

More of circumstance is to be found in “Keats's Address to Autumn”:—

“Who hath not seen thee oft beneath thy store?
Sometimes who ever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft lifted by the winnowing wind;
As on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies; while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its winged flowers;
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider-press with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.”

A sadder form suggests itself to Tennyson:—

“A spirit haunts the year's last hours,
Dwelling amid these yellowing bowers:
To himself he talks;
For at eventide, listening earnestly,
At his work you may hear him sob and sigh
In the walks;
Earthward he boweth the heavy stalk
Of the mouldering flowers.”

And Shelley holds but a taper, as at a lying-in-state, to show where

"The year
On the earth her death-bed, in a shroud of leaves, dead
Is lying."

With Thompson, winter is "dread" and "pale;" with Cowper, "cold and rude." And amidst its gloom, Tennyson watches over the year with fond tenderness, bidding us

"Tread softly, and speak low,
For the old year lies a-dying;"

Telling us "how hard he breathes," and crying as the last gasp is given—

"Shake hands, before you die!
Old year, we'll dearly rue for you.
What is it we can do for you?
Speak out before you die."

The phenomena of day and night have been suggestive of many personifications. Shakspeare, in a few words, gives us a vivid image of the morning:—

"Jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops."

Not less beautiful is Milton's picture,

"The morn,
Wak'd by the circling hours, with rosy hand
Unbarr'd the gates of light."

Passing by "the silent noon," we feel the presence of the "sublimely tender, solemnly serene" twilight—a spirit that doth

"Render birth
To dim enchantments."

In the hush of night, "nature's soft nurse," we hear Ben Johnson singing,

"Break, Phantasy, from thy cave of cloud,
And spread thy purple wings."

Or hearken to the stately apostrophe of Young:—

"O majestic night!
Nature's great ancestor! Day's elder-born!
And fated to survive the transient sun!
By mortals and immortals seen with awe,
A starry crown thy raven brow adorns,
An azure zone thy waist; clouds in heaven's loom,
Wrought through varieties of shape and shade,
In ample folds of drapery divine,
Thy flowing mantle, form; and heaven throughout,
Voluminously pour thy pompous train."

The personification of the heavenly bodies was the basis of that ancient Chaldean Idolatry to which Job referred when he said, "If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand, this also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge, for I should have denied the God that is above." The sacred Muse of Milton cries with reverence,

"Hail, Holy Light, offspring of Heaven, first born!"

To the glorious source of light the strain of Byron ascends,

"Sire of the Seasons! Monarch of the Climes,
And those who dwell in them! for near or far
Our inborn spirits have a tint of thee,
Even as our outward aspects."

Shakspeare's appellation, "The world's comforter," has less dignity but more tenderness. With a mythological reminiscence, Ben Johnson serenades the moon,

"Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,
Now the sun is laid to sleep,
Seated in thy silver chair,
State in wonted manner keep:
Hesperus entreats thy light,
Goddess, excellently bright."

The sonnet of Sir Philip Sidney gives us a very different picture.

"With how sad steps, O moon, thou climb'st the skies,
How silently, and with how wan a face!"

While in her harvest glory, she has inspired the more rapturous song:—

"All hail! thou lovely queen of night,
Bright empress of the starry sky!
The meekness of thy silv'ry light
Beams gladness on the gazer's eye."

The stars have been as variously conceived of. In Sackville's vision,—

"The golden stars were whirled amid their race,
And on the earth did laugh with their twinkling light."

While Milton assigns to them a statelier march and a diviner office—"Ministering light prepared."

Thus nearly all the elements and objects of nature have had personality ascribed to them. Some presented in expressive action, like the winds,

"Who take the ruffian billows by the top,
Curling their monstrous heads, and hanging them
With deafening clamours in the slippery clouds."

Others, having a voice, like Shelley's "Cloud," to proclaim their history and purpose. We are not to suppose that only wayward fancy and an arbitrary will preside over these poetical personifications. The keen perception and the delicate sympathy of the poet assist him in recognizing in nature correspondences to human emotions and to individual life. His profounder consciousness of the mysterious motions of the soul of man and his clearer vision of the meanings that underlie all the forms and moods of nature enable him to create, by the personification of the latter, a harmony between the material and the spiritual.

In the prophetic and poetical portions of the sacred Scriptures the personification of nature is frequent.

In the regions of philosophic theology we find the personification of nature no longer rendered luminous by the brilliancy of imagination, but dimly discerned through the mists of speculation. Pantheism, both in its ancient and modern forms, is a vast extension of the idea of nature's personality. To believe that the universe with its various substances, forms, and forces, is the body of God; that all its elements and powers possess the self-originating and continuing power of Deity; that each atom of matter, whether forming part of the dust of the road that is whirled along by the eddying wind, or entering into the delicate structure of the human brain, is equally part of the great World-God; that mental and spiritual phenomena are due to the dispositions of matter or are, at all events, essentially connected with it; that in the most literal sense, God is all and in all—is but a philosophical attempt to create eternal realities out of the fleeting images of poetic visions. Incomplete in its *data*, unwarranted in its premises, and illogical in its conclusions, as such philosophy may be—it has been suggested, nevertheless, by observing the unity, order, and adaptations of nature, which present a seeming consciousness, intelligence, and personality. The notion of eastern mysticism and of Neo-Platonism, of the final absorption of all things, ourselves included, into the Deity, seems to have a similar connection with our subject. The idea of a *growing* personality seems to be here prominent. A face in a dim mirror from which the haze is passing, revealing ever more distinct features and an intenser expression,—a form ever growing in coherence and shape beneath the modeller's hand. The conception has been vividly presented by Bailey in "The Mystic," and by Kingsley in "Hypatia."

In enquiring into the cause of this universal and ancient tendency to personify nature, the question at once suggests itself, is it nature which impresses man, or man who impresses nature? Are the utterances of nature only the echoes of man's voice, or are they great messages which it was given to the material world

the power to proclaim at its creation? Are the sympathy and agreement of nature with human thoughts and feelings merely fancies of man, or at most, evanescent shadows and fleeting reflections of his form, or are they inherent and original qualities? We believe the latter.

All men obtain the same general impressions from the same aspects of nature. The farm-labourer who watches the grey mist vanish from the fields before the sheen of morning light, and the enthusiastic tourist, who rejoices in the hour of prime on the summit of Snowdon, receive essentially the same ideas of joy and energy. The jaded city man, who at evening leaves behind the din of crowded streets and the harass of the office, to enjoy the hum of insects and the scents of flowers in the garden of his suburban home, has imparted to him a sense of tenderness and peace, as true if not so ecstatic, as that which lovers realize, as they breathe their vespers amidst the most bewitchingly romantic scenery, and under the most dreamy light. Again, if we surrender ourselves up passively to the influences of nature, we shall always find the same inward mood produced by the same outward conditions. The bright calm day will ever soothe and rejoice, the dark stormy day will ever depress and awe. The creation, therefore, of substantially the same impressions by nature, upon those differently circumstanced, and possessing different temperaments and habits of thought, and *the* invariable realization by us of the same feelings when passively resigned to the same natural influences, clearly show that nature in herself possesses qualities which influence human emotions and sympathies. *The recognition of such qualities has led to the personification of nature.* "

Yet, it cannot be denied that the influences of nature are modified, to a considerable extent, by the powers and condition of each individual. Some have a larger faculty of *perception* than others. They discern more clearly and fully the significance of the forms and aspects of nature; they are more sensitive to her passing phases. Those in whom *imagination* predominates mould the elements of nature into forms suggestive of complex ideas. The architecture of Genius rears, with simple materials, glorious structures of varied fair and noble orders. A *selective* power belongs also to man, whereby those particular features and partial aspects of nature which are in greatest sympathy with his present mood are exclusively regarded. No scene, no phase but contains many elements. Any one of them may furnish the substance of your thought: according to your mood, you may pensively think only of the withering of nature, or you may be artistically charmed with the rich hues of the foliage, as you look upon an autumn landscape. Tennyson,

standing upon the "cold grey stones" of Clevedon, gives prominence to those material features which harmonize with his own sorrowful yearnings

"for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still."

As he listens to the breaking of the waves at the foot of the crags, he recognizes in their sad cadence a mournful unison with the moaning surge of his own spirit's tide against the rocks of memory.

After allowing then for these modifying influences, we conclude that the material world has been so ordered as to render it correspondent to all the phases of man's inner life, and responsive to all the cries of his spirit. Every form is intended to be a symbol, every sound a significant voice. Symbols and voices that man alone can understand and interpret. A fuller view of the unity of the creation is thus presented. The world has been created, not only to supply man's material wants, but also to sympathize with his mental and emotional life. The mountains rear themselves in colossal majesty, the valleys slope in gentle beauty, the ocean stretches in profound immensity; the wind sings or sighs, or howls; the thunder exultingly peals, or wildly crashes, or sullenly rolls; the wave laughingly ripples, or sadly murmurs, or fiercely roars—not simply in obedience to laws that relate only to the material economy, but also with a deeper reference to the spiritual nature of man. Nature has been rendered capable of imparting instruction, of arousing hope, of ministering consolation, and of inspiring solemnity. Thus the personification of nature in mythological legends, mediæval superstitions, imaginative literature, and philosophic speculation, furnishes only evidence of the subservience of the material to the moral world. Their connection indicates their origin in one Divine Will, while their relations are such as to proclaim the dominion of the spiritual over the material, of the eternal over the temporal. The influences of nature are each and all of them winged with spiritual forces, whose power our souls will realize, if but rightly receptive:—

"The eye it cannot choose but see;
We cannot bid the ear be still;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against or with our will.
Nor less I deem that there are Powers,
Which of themselves our minds impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness."

MR. GLADSTONE'S CHURCH-RATE SCHEME.

It was with some little anxiety, not unmingled, however, with pleasurable anticipations, that we went down to the House of Commons on the 7th of March, to hear the debate on the second reading of the Bill for the Abolition of Church-rates—a debate which has by this time acquired historic interest and importance. We were solicitous to know how the good cause, entrusted now to a new advocate, would fare with a new parliament, and with a ministry which, though not absolutely new, has passed through so great a change, as really to have assumed a fresh phase and entered on a new era of its history. At first there was but little indication, at least among the members themselves, of any special interest attaching to the proceedings of the day. During the speech of Mr. Hardcastle, the opposition benches were exceedingly thin, and those on his own side exhibited nothing of that excitement and eagerness to be discovered on the occasion of a great party fight. Still, he was himself evidently impressed with the responsibility of the task which he had undertaken, and the cheers with which from time to time he was greeted proved that he was surrounded by some earnest men, who appreciated his manly bearing, and were determined to lend him a hearty support. After the first few sentences of his speech we were ourselves perfectly satisfied with our new leader. He is not, indeed, a great orator, nor is it likely that he will ever evoke any very intense enthusiasm; but there is much in his tone of advocacy suited to the peculiar position he has to occupy, and the audience with whom he has to deal. Though there is an occasional hesitancy in his delivery, his opinions have evidently been well matured, and were stated with great clearness, and sustained by cogent reasoning. His straightforward, intelligent mode of advocacy told upon the House, and impressed it all the more from the fact of his own avowed Churchmanship. Charles Gilpin's frank, outspoken, and earnest utterances on behalf of Christian willinghood, deepened any feeling which his predecessor had awakened; and his direct and pointed appeals to the opponents of the measure, happily conceived, and forcibly put, can hardly have failed to suggest topics for serious reflection, to all whose attachment to the Establishment rests more on religious than on political grounds.

When Mr. Walpole rose to move his amendment, the Conservatives began to crowd in, to the support of a champion wisely selected for the difficult work to be performed. He is an earnest

and pleasing, though not very powerful speaker, but we doubt if any one else of his party could have presented so good a case as that which he made out on behalf of an impost so obnoxious. Even the Nonconformists who heard him could not but listen with respect to one whose arguments were evidently the expression of his own most cherished convictions; and though they might wonder how he could evade the force of the considerations urged by the advocates of voluntaryism, and endorse the transparent fallacies with which he sought to support his cause, it was impossible for them either to question his sincerity, or to withhold their admiration from one who did battle so ably on behalf of that which he held to be right. To us it appeared strange how he could, at the same time, insist that church-rates were a charge upon the property of the country, and yet take credit for the fact, that every parish was at liberty to repudiate the obligation; but we are not called upon to reconcile the contradiction; however apparent the inconsistency might be to us, and it was certainly not felt by him, or his supporters, who listened with intense delight to his pleadings, and received his various points with great heartiness. Nonconformists, at all events, have no reason to regret that he should treat the question as involving the great principle of Church Establishments, nor need any one be much troubled with his attacks on the Liberation Society in general and Mr. Morley in particular. We should have thought that such arguments had already done sufficient service; but if it pleases Church defenders to insist upon them, they certainly do not harm us. Considering that many men fail to appreciate abstract principle, except it be reduced to a concrete form, we could hardly desire a better battle-ground than the Church-rate question; but it is surely impolitic for our opponents to represent that the very existence of a State Church is bound up with the maintenance of an odious tax, which yields very little, but which produces incessant bickering, and involves the authorities of the Church in proceedings of the most offensive and irritating character. Such impolicy is the more glaring, in face of the fact presented at the commencement of the debate, and afterwards repeated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the abolition of Church Cess in Ireland instead of imperiling the existence of the Irish Church, had rather been the means of giving it a prolonged lease of existence. Still, "No Surrender" was clearly the watchword of the party, as became still more manifest when Mr. Ducane rose to continue the debate. His speech was bold and defiant, but added nothing to the strength of Mr. Walpole's argument. His talk about the "olive branch," and the aching arms of those by whom it had been extended, was simply ludicrous; and altogether his speech, however it may have pleased

vehement partizans—revealed only that intense and unreasoning hate of Dissent, and that determination to support, the Church as one of the great institutions of the country, which is so characteristic of the country squire, and which, after all, is one of the most formidable hindrances against which we have to contend. We have a case in favour of Christian willinghood, resting on principles so sound, established by arguments and facts so incontestable, and appealing to so many of the finest feelings of Christian hearts, that we may hope, ultimately, to move men accessible to reasoning, and especially to, reasoning based on New Testament teaching. But the dull, stolid prejudices which cling to things that are, simply because they are; or the haughty arrogance, which treats Nonconformists as a set of troublesome claimants to be resisted with as much determination and as much insolence as may be supposed safe, is, of all obstacles, most difficult to remove.

Mr. Ducane's vapid declamation appeared more feeble by the contrast with the thoughtful, conciliatory, and statesmanlike speech of Mr. Gladstone, by whom he was immediately followed. Very rarely has the great orator spoken in a style more worthy of himself, and the high position he occupies. For ourselves, we could only marvel at the change which had passed over him since last we heard him discuss an ecclesiastical topic. He was then opposing Mr. Goschen's Bill for the Abolition of University Tests, and the unwonted feebleness of his reasonings and manifest constraint under which he laboured, marked how much he felt the difficulty of his position—a position which laid him open to attacks under which his sensitive spirit must have winced. Very different was his tone now. The clearness of his statements, the incisiveness of some of his arguments, the mingled freedom and dignity of his manner, even the very ring of his voice—all shewed that he was "unmuzzled," and made us intensely thankful to the miserable bigots who, with suicidal policy, had cut the bonds which hitherto had held him.

The *Times*, with that tendency to misrepresentation and disingenuousness which has been so strongly developed of late, told its readers (expecting, we suppose, that though they might go through its own leader, they would not study the speech) that he spoke against the measure, but voted for it. Nothing could be more untrue. He pronounced, indeed, against the "*unconditional*" abolition of Church-rates; but when he came to specify his conditions, it was manifest they were not such as need distress Dissenters at all. Throughout his speech he contended against the principle of coercion, and asked only that Churchmen might have the right of making a voluntary assessment of their own property for ecclesiastical purposes, and of managing

the fund thus raised without any interference from those who had not contributed towards it ; in short, as Mr. Bright afterwards showed, that the plan which has worked satisfactorily for many years in Manchester and Rochdale should be extended to the country at large. This, with the exception of some provision about burial-grounds, which was not essential to the plan, and which appeared in our judgment, needlessly to complicate it, was really all that he asked. His speech was that of a clear-headed, sagacious statesman, whose loyal devotion to his own church was so tempered by wisdom, that it did not degenerate into a blind and bigotted prejudice, and who felt that his position gave him the right, if it did not enforce the responsibility, of seeking to find some mode of reconciling the conflicting claims of the different parties. So far were those present from sharing the impression of the *Times*, that two or three Nonconformists, who sat together, observed, as he sat down, "After that speech it matters little how he votes, for his influence is all on our side." So, too, felt the Tories ; for the look of blank astonishment, not to say dismay in their ranks, told how heavy the blow which had been administered. Friends and foes, indeed, alike felt that the question had been raised to a higher level, and advanced one stage towards a final settlement.

It was rather amusing to hear poor Mr. Beresford Hope attempting to persuade the House, as he had undoubtedly contrived to persuade himself, that Mr. Gladstone's plan was identical with that which he would have introduced that very day but for the intervention of Mr. Walpole. A hard case surely, if his kindly deference to the schemes of his leaders and to the wish of so trusty a champion of the Church, as Mr. Walpole, had robbed him of the glory of settling so difficult a question. To do him justice, he spoke in the spirit of conciliation, and perhaps it was the very strength of the desire to reach a pacific solution which prevented him from perceiving the essential difference between the two propositions. At first, indeed, it may seem a slight thing, whether it is the Churchman who expresses his willingness, or the Nonconformist who proclaims his unwillingness to pay a Church-rate, but the distinction between the two involves the very essence of the whole controversy, inasmuch as the one plan retains that principle of compulsory payment which the other as distinctly repudiates. The one says, the law which requires that every parishioner shall contribute to his parish church, both for the support of the fabric and the maintenance of its worship, must be maintained ; but a proviso shall be inserted to exempt you Dissenters from the obligation of payment, on condition that you shall, in a way prescribed, record the fact of your conscientious objection. The other says, the law

shall be abrogated, and henceforth the magistrate and the policeman shall have nothing to do with enforcing payments for these ecclesiastical purposes; but you who are members of the Church, may, if you will, assess yourselves according to your present mode of parochial rating, for a Church-rate, the entire control of which shall be in the hands of those by whom it is paid. Of course, were it in any sense a pecuniary consideration, Dissenters would gain as much by the one plan as by the other. The superior recommendation of Mr. Gladstone's proposal lies in the fact that it distinctly abolishes a compulsory exaction for a religious purpose.

The other speeches in the debate we have not space to describe here particularly. Mr. Bright was distinct, sensible, manly, and withal extremely calm and temperate. We could not but think, as we marked the crowded benches eager to hear him, and the respectful attention with which his speech was received, how astonished would some of the country farmers have been, could they have been in the House, and seen the influence wielded by the man whom they had been accustomed to hear continually assailed in their political gatherings, as though he were a very monster of iniquity. Mr. Hardy declaimed with his usual shallowness and violence, and with even more than his accustomed conceit. It would seem as if the victory which the country parsons gave him at Oxford had inspired him with the idea that he is able to cope with Gladstone. If such an illusion, however, has entered his own brain, it is certainly shared by no one beside, and the bitterness of tone which characterized his concluding remarks, gave us the idea that even the speaker himself was not quite satisfied with his own success; while the somewhat severe attack he made upon country gentlemen, who pay Church-rates, in their own parishes, but vote in Parliament for their abolition, indicated that he was not very hopeful as to the prospects of his party. His speech, whatever its merits or demerits, at all events kindled so much of the enthusiasm of his party that, when he sat down, they were so impatient to divide, that they would not give a fair hearing to any other speaker. In vain did Sir Thomas Lloyd seek that courteous consideration which the House rarely refuses to extend to a new member. The loud and angry cries of "Divide," with which he was met drowned his attempts at utterance, and determined as he was in his opposition to such ungenerous treatment, he was compelled at last to bow before the storm.

At first, it seemed as if Mr. Morley would have shared a similar fate, but he had been too frequently and pointedly alluded to in the debate, for the House, with any regard to justice, to refuse him a brief hearing. After a short time,

therefore, but not without some difficulty he contrived to secure quiet, and apparently to awaken some interest in his hearers. Opinions differ greatly as to the effect of his speech. There are some who have gone so far as to say that it decided the vote of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but if so this could only be owing to the fact that it indicated the willingness of Dissenters to accede to the suggestion which he had thrown out. On this subject we ourselves could thoroughly agree with what Mr. Morley said; but there were other points in his speech which made us not a little apprehensive as to the influence which his presence in the House may exert on the cause of Nonconformity. A more bold, uncompromising, and decided tone is certainly demanded from any one who would fairly represent to Parliament the opinions of English Nonconformists. Mr. Morley's notions on Church property are, to say the least, somewhat hazy. We think it a pity, indeed, that he should have attempted any defence or explanation of his evidence given before the Lord's Committee, nor, had we been among his opponents, should we have thought that his apology was very satisfactory. The design which the Bishop of London may have had in the line of examination which he adopted, was really nothing to the purpose; for though the Bishop may have acted unfairly, and Mr. Morley may have been somewhat taken by surprise, the question remains whether the real opinions of Nonconformists were expressed in his answers. On this he has thrown little new light. Great allowance unquestionably must be made for a gentleman addressing an audience, a large part of whom were unfriendly, under such singularly unpropitious circumstances. Nevertheless, unless some explanation be given of his assertion that "not one in a thousand Dissenters desires to touch the revenues of the National Church," it is sure to be quoted against us in the future. If Mr. Morley has got into his head any notion, that the Dissenters generally, or any great number of them would be content to meet the favourite view of the High Church party by setting the Episcopalian Church free from all relation to the State, while leaving her in undisturbed possession of the vast ecclesiastical endowments of the nation, the sooner for his own sake and for that of others, that he is disabused of it the better. We were equally astonished to hear him telling of the excellent clergymen who were so much interested in their work, that they care nothing about Church-rates or other similar questions. We have no doubt that there are such clergymen, but it has rarely been our good fortune to meet with any of them. The Evangelical party in particular, whom we suppose Mr. Morley would regard as doing the greatest spiritual work, we have always found to be the most determined supporters of all ecclesiastical injus-

tice. The *Record*, their leading organ, is of all Church papers that which is most bent on maintaining the present system. It is no use, in fact, to bandy mere compliments, when there is a question of great principles, in relation to which, neither party can nor ought to admit of a compromise. The ideal of Christian charity, in a such case, is realized not by those who profess indifference, but rather by those who, holding most tenaciously by their own convictions, are prepared to respect the opinions of those who differ from them, and where necessity arises, to discuss them with freedom and good temper. Above all, we can never assent to the idea of the eminent goodness of men who close their eyes to the real condition of the Church with which they are identified, and to whose influence they are contributing, and satisfy themselves with the plea that they are doing their own work, and that questions of Church arrangement may be left to others. The decision of this great question of religious equality has not a little to do with the spiritual future of this country, and the men who are seeking to solve its difficulties are rendering a religious service to their generation not second to any in importance. We cannot commend the religious selfishness of any, who, while profiting by the supremacy of the sect to which they belong, excuse themselves from all responsibility in the matter, by pleading that they have greater work to do.

A few words as to Mr. Gladstone's proposition. Of course, we can speak only of the general principle, and it is quite possible that, when it comes to be reduced to a practical form, it may be open to insurmountable objections. Meanwhile, we must express our regret that it has been spoken of as a "compromise." Compromise, so far as we can interpret the right honourable gentleman's words, there is none. The compulsory system is absolutely abolished; in other words, our principle is recognized. All that is granted to Churchmen is the right of managing any funds which they may raise by a voluntary assessment. No doubt there may be, and will be, cases in which, owing to the overweening influence of parson or squire, what is called voluntary may be really compulsory; but we do not see how any legislation can alter this. It is simply one of the results of the social superiority belonging to the favoured sect, the unfair results of which we may regret, but which, under present circumstances, we cannot obviate. To some it might seem as though a legal provision, securing to the contributors to a voluntary rate the absolute control of the funds thus obtained, was superfluous; but while such liberty is the inalienable right of every Dissenting community, it is not enjoyed by the members of the Episcopalian Church. Simply because it is the National Church, all the parishioners have a legal right to manage the funds, in whatever

way raised, designed for the Parish Church. Of course, when the right to demand a parish rate is abandoned, the correlative right of the parishioners to control the funds must cease. Non-conformists would be the very last to ask that they should reap where they have not sown, or gather where they have not strawed.

It is well enough to soothe the feelings of a defeated party by letting them think they have obtained a compromise; but we shall be surprised if the Conservative friends of the Church are content to regard the present scheme in this light. It can hardly fail to be peculiarly objectionable to them, from the fact that, in this important matter, it reduces the Anglican Church to the level of one of the sects. Had there been the slightest compromise of our great principle, we should certainly not have recommended the acceptance even of terms which might appear to be the best we could get at present. To us the settlement will not be such a gain as to induce us to abandon one iota of our principles in order to effect it. On the other hand, our great principle being conceded, it would be a great mistake in point, both of principle and policy, for us to maintain an agitation solely for the purpose of depriving Churchmen of a right to which all candid men will say they are entitled. The two points in relation to which we shall need to exercise care are, first, that our rights as citizens in national property are not affected, and, second, that the legal machinery created for the assessment and collection of other local rates, is not unfairly used by Episcopalians for their own sectarian purposes in connection with the voluntary rate.

BRIEF NOTICES OF BOOKS.

St. Paul: His Life and Ministry, to the End of His Third Missionary Journey. By T. BINNEY. London: Nisbet and Co., 1866.

Discourses on Special Occasions. By R. W. DALE, M.A. London: Jackson, Walford, and Co., 1866.

The Secret of Life; being Eight Sermons preached at Nottingham, By SAMUEL COX. London: Arthur Miall. 1866.

SERMONS again! More Sermons! *Toujours perdrix.* Dean Rarusay's calculation, that in Great Britain alone there are no fewer than four millions of sermons preached every year, has very naturally drawn forth a good deal of comment, not all of it by any means favourable

to the producers of this species of literature (as it is for the most part regarded). We had ourselves previously come to pretty nearly the same conclusion as the Dean, as to the quantum of sermonizing that was being hebdomadally "done." And we confess to have more than once detected ourselves in a deep sigh, spontaneously rising up *ex imo pectore*, at the thought.

The *Pall Mall Gazette*, of March 12th, has an article on the subject, which, though we can but partially sympathize with, is worth pondering by all preachers. The writer—not the "IN SICCO HABITANS" of *The Times*,—and by no means so flippant or cynical as the *Saturday Review* on the same frequently recurring topic, has but a poor idea of the mass of sermons "inflicted" on the community. Speaking of these, when published, he says, "Sermons do not sell;" and "that they do not sell for one quite conclusive reason. The minds which produce them are not of the same relative rank, in the general order of minds, that was held by the old divines . . . If good sermons were published, they would be known; and if good sermons were preached, they would be published [?]. That out of four millions preached per year, not three should excite the kind of general interest which the writings of a dozen different authors create is a fatal circumstance." We are sure that there is abundant answer to this, and answer that, to our minds, would be satisfactory; for there are many fallacies neatly wrapped up in these few sentences, which, however, we have not space for exposing. But he goes on to say, "How much more interesting would sermons be if preachers condescended to remember that there is a sense in which the subject matter of all sermons belongs to literature. St. Paul was an Apostle, no doubt; but St. Paul was also a Greek writer, not only a writer in Greek. He did his work in the world through a language whose literature is still alive, and in regions where that literature had its origin, or exercised most part of its early influence. Yet not one preacher in a hundred ever makes his audience realize such facts, or think of Corinth and Athens, Ephesus and Thessalonica, as places where an actual human life differing from their own in all but the great elemental fact of human passion went on. The names are found in sermons, but they are not clothed with life. Dogmas which rose out of sacred events are dwelt on, but the sacred events themselves are presented in as colourless a fashion as cities on a map. The faint heaven of such men inspires no rapture, and their pale hell no fear; just because—unlike the old divines—they are not in communion with that great heart of nature which inspires the poet and the historian, all who think well and all who paint well."

We venture to say that Mr. BINNEY's Sunday Evening Lectures (or, as he would call it, "talk,") to young men, about St. Paul, make as near an approach to what is desired as the reviewer himself, if a reasonable man, could wish. And we would very willingly have taken him from the Weigh House to Birmingham, with some confidence that he would admit that these sermons of Mr. Dale's too were well worth preaching and listening to. And we should have been willing to pass from Birmingham to Nottingham, that he might hear how

Mr. Cox also addresses the understandings and consciences and hearts of young men. And if he did not admit that these men are as well worth listening to on the Sunday, for all the high, religious, and moral purposes for which the Christian ministry is instituted, as *The Times*, or the *Pall Mall Gazette*, is worth reading, for other purposes, on a week day, we should regard him as more wanting in candour and the right sense of what preaching should be, than at present we deem.

To speak of Mr. Binney at this time of day, would be simply superfluous. The book is worthy of the man. "Well up," of course, in all the literature that belongs to his great subject, these Lectures are by no means a mere re-production of Conybeare and Howson, and others, who have done so much to make the Apostle live again before us; but the varied stores of a life-time of accumulation, passing through his own independent mind, instinct with vitality, come to us with all the charm of freshness and earnest purpose. Mr. Binney wants to pique and "provoke" young men to study the great Apostle for themselves; and so, purposely avoiding all attempt at an exhaustive treatment, just does that which is admirably adapted to stimulate inquiry, by awakening a quite new interest in his "hero."

We have often heard that "Sermons are a drug in the market," and we have wondered at the facility with which good men have been tempted to add to the heap. But there are sermons, and sermons; and Mr. DALE's volume is a volume to be welcomed. These are not sermons "*delivered before* such or such a congregation, but sermons *preached* directly to the men and women of that busy Birmingham where his lot is cast. They could not have been preached a century ago, as so many sermons might have been; they belong to the day in which we live, and are addressed to the living people who yesterday read *The Times*, or perhaps voted for Mr. Bright, or wondered at the animosity displayed against John Stuart Mill, or to-morrow will be in danger, in their business transactions, of sailing a little too near the wind. Emphatically, good sermons. In them the preacher approves himself "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed."

Mr. Cox's Sermons could not have been preached twenty years ago, for they too on every page reveal the influence of modern thought—quite modern. Has the reader marked, as one of the most significant signs of the times, the springing up, here and there, in thoughtful minds, of the conviction—that the life of our Lord on earth, instead of being a brief temporary marvel of toiling and laborious and self-denying love, was truly but a *manifestation in time* of the *Eternal* life and love which was from the beginning?—that, therefore, it is scarcely exceptional, a disjointed disrupted fragment, but an illustration of the heart of God, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever will be. Mr. Cox has seized this precious truth, and the related one—that love, which alone is life, is, wherever wrong and need and misery are, self-sacrifice; which is thus crowned as the law of all true life. In earnest sympathy with his great theme Mr. Cox seeks to enforce this spirit-stirring truth on his people; like Mr. Binney, addressing young men more particularly. The sermons are but eight,

and so the volume, being but small, will have, we trust, the larger circulation.

While on the subject, let us mention one or two single sermons that we have received. Rev. T. STEPHENSON, of Carlisle Chapel, Lower Kennington, has published, by request, an admirable one on "City Life", which deserves to be well circulated. (May be had at 13, Paternoster Row.) Rev. A. MACKENNAL, B. A., of Surbiton, has just published also, by request, one on "The Sweetness and Bitterness of the Prophet's Experience," which will be read with pleasure and profit. (London: *T. Snow*.) The author of "Quiet Hours" has sent forth one of his earnest appeals to the understandings and consciences and hearts of Christians on the Glorious Gospel of the Blessed God; and the more it is read and pondered the better. (London: *Elliot Stock*).

Eastward. By NORMAN MACLEOD, D.D. London: Alexander Strahan, 1866.

Days and Nights in the East. By HORATIUS BONAR, D.D. London: Nisbet and Co., 1866.

Palestine for the Young. By Rev. A. BONAR. Religious Tract Society.

WE wonder whether books of travel will be written a century hence; whether in the year 2,000, for instance, "able editors" will be at liberty to turn their pleasant "outings" to good editorial account; or whether these swiftly-passing days will not by-and-by be looked back upon as the good old days for editors and tourists, when a man might double the pleasures of travel (to say nothing of the profit) by chatting them all over again to a good-humoured and pleasantly-listening public? Why, what on earth will there be left to say?

None of our readers need to be informed that Dr. Macleod (getting now, however, to be more frequently called Norman Macleod—a pleasant token of the feeling he has inspired into a large number of people) went last year on a trip to the Holy Land. And, of course, everybody who knew he was gone looked for some pleasant, chatty, genial narrative of incidents and experiences. Accordingly the readers of *Good Words* had the benefit, first of all, in monthly instalments; and now all the world is invited to see and think and experience and enjoy all that the intelligent, broad-minded, and happy-natured Doctor saw and thought and experienced and enjoyed, from the time of leaving Marseilles on the 20th of February, on board the *Valetta*, till, at Beyrout, stepping again into the steamer, he "exchanged Eastward and the Holy Land, for Northward and Home!"

The volume before us—handsomely got up, toned paper, good type, with seventy illustrations from photographs—does not profess to add much to the topographical information already so abundantly possessed; but as no two men see with the same eyes, it is often both advantageous and pleasant to travel again over familiar ground in fresh company. And a better furnished or more thoroughly agreeable companion than Dr. Macleod one need not wish for; or, if unreasonably wishing, is not

likely to meet with. Invaluable are the three minute volumes of Dr. Robinson, whose measuring tape was always in his hand; and Dean Stanley's book on Sinai and Palestine who could afford to dispense with? Yet we are glad to have these thoroughly genial pages by a man who, never throwing off the gentleman and the Christian, could wisely forget the divine and the author, and give himself up to the thorough enjoyment as well as appreciation of the scenes which, above all others on this planet, go far to "make earth all hallowed ground." We find ourselves still better able than before to realize every locality, and all the associations that cluster so richly about the sacred places, and the impressions they are calculated to produce.

Dr. BONAR's book quite as fully deserves our good word as Dr. Macleod's. It is a condensation of his former two volumes on the East, and we are sure that he and his publisher have judged rightly in believing that there is a large class who would be interested in the illustration of Bible scenes and the elucidation of Bible passages, who would yet rather not be troubled with those details and topographical references which occupy a large space in the two original volumes. The book is as neatly got up as could be wished, toned paper and good type, while its size and price will place it within the reach of almost all classes. Let our young friends by all means be supplied with it, and let it be found in all our church and chapel libraries, and be well circulated among our Sunday-school teachers.

"Palestine for the Young"—carefully prepared by Rev. ANDREW A. BONAR, for the Religious Tract Society—is also a book to be warmly commended to parents and teachers who wish to interest the young in the geography and history of the Holy Land. And how much of invaluable evidence for the truth of the Biblical record is quietly preserved for us in the innumerable sites and remains of ancient cities and towns and villages, it would probably surprise most of us to learn. Mr. Bonar has made his book what such a one ought to be—as interesting as it is instructive.

Sunday. By E. H. PLUMPTRE, M.A. London: Alexander Strahan, 1866.

THE Professor of Divinity in King's College, London, has just published, as a pamphlet of thirty-two pages, with additions, an article he had contributed to *The Contemporary Review*. It is not only an admirable *résumé* of—we had nearly written—all that can be said on the subject, but it is a masterly presentation of the case, as it is to-day forced on the consideration of us all. The pamphlet is a happy specimen of candour combined with frankness, of respect for other people's convictions while outspokenly proclaiming his own, and of reverent and tender appreciation of the blessedness of the day of rest with a clear Christian perception and firm grasp of the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. We deem it a valuable contribution towards the happy settlement of the controversy on what has come to be called the Sabbath question, and heartily commend it to the candid attention of our readers.

Perhaps we may as well give an intimation of Mr. Plumptre's

“whereabouts” by quoting the closing sentences of his pamphlet, occurring in a note on p. 32. Speaking of Dr. Hessey’s Bampton Lectures on the subject he says :

It will be seen, however, that I differ from Dr. Hessey in not being able to accept the validity of the reasoning by which he claims a Divine and perpetual authority for the observance of the Lord’s Day. His syllogism, if I do not misrepresent it stands thus:—

Whatever was ordained by the Apostles (obviously temporary enactments excepted) is of Divine and perpetual obligation :

The Lord’s Day was so ordained :

Therefore, it is of Divine and perpetual obligation.

Of this syllogism it may be questioned how far the major premiss has the character of a theological axiom; and the evidence of the minor is confessedly probable only and uncertain. That which I would substitute for it is as follows:

What the Christian Society has accepted everywhere and in all ages (obviously eccentric departures from the rule excepted) may legitimately be regarded as essential to the Christian life:

The religious observance of the Lord’s Day has been so recognized:

Therefore the religious observance of the Lord’s Day may legitimately be regarded as essential to the Christian life.

We agree in finding the measure of that observance in the lessons of experience, in the teaching of Christ and of St. Paul, in a wise expediency, in adapting it to the “diversities of countries, times, and men’s manners, in a wide sympathy for those whose knowledge, habits, feelings, are unlike our own.”

The Awakening of Italy and the Crisis of Rome. By Rev. J. A. WYLIE, LL.D. London: Religious Tract Society.

THIS work is founded, the preface tells us, partly on the personal observations of the author, who has visited Italy four times, and resided about a year in the country; and partly on the study of the Italian journals, the numerous pamphlets, political and religious, which have recently issued from the press of Italy, the reports of Boards of Commerce, and the Blue Books of the Italian Government.

The author, first glancing at the past of Italy, then passes on to the Italy of to-day; noting here on the surface the absence of great principles, the want of fixity in all minds, the conflict of numerous parties, while below the surface is a dense substratum of popular superstition cropping up in processions, pilgrimages, and enslaving and demoralizing beliefs. Thirdly, the awakening of the Italian intellect comes under consideration, as shown in the demand for political and ecclesiastical independence in the North, the revival of literature and the fine arts in Tuscany, and the resurrection of pantheistic philosophy in the South. The fourth head comprises the industrial, commercial, and legislative movements; while the fifth is devoted to the subject of the evangelization of the Peninsula, and the closing section is devoted to Rome and its crisis.

The book is a very interesting one, and, we doubt not, fully reliable, while it abounds in the information which will help the reader to form a judgment for himself. It is a welcome supply of a want which, at a time like the present, many must be conscious of.

THE
CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR.

MAY, 1866.

THE ROUND TABLE.

CHAPTER V.

HOME—THE STUDY—THE ANGEL OF ANNUNCIATION—OLIVE PLANTS
—THE PRAYER.

So the pleasant little Oxford trip was over, and Mr. Langston and his Mary, as he loved to call her, were fairly settled in their happy home. I knew the house of old well, every room of it, and have it before my mind as I write these reminiscences. To a minister or student, one room in particular is, of course, chief, and that, like a happy human heart, ought to have a look southward. Mr. Langston's study had. It looked, as Julius Cæsar would say, to the south and the setting sun. It was an inviting room, and, with his well-filled book-shelves and facilities for work, and two or three maps and charts, and a cabinet picture or two, and a few good engravings of men whose very names were an inspiration, it is no wonder that it was the favourite room. Oh, what happy hours that dear study witnessed—hours of thorough work—of communion through their books with the mighty dead; of earnest, anxious pulpit preparation; hours, too, when the door was fastened, and Mary's gentle tap even was unheeded—a token she at once understood. And then, when the busy inmate, after a good spell of work, felt at liberty for a little blessed recreation, what cosy minutes, lengthening unconsciously into marvellously short half-hours even, they two spent

in that happy sanctum. And sometimes of an afternoon, and oftener of an evening, they sat together there, preferring it to any other. And she claimed the right of cutting open all his new books for him; and he dedicated one particular chair, the cosiest he had, to "Sancta Maria;" and as she sat and worked he would read to her, sometimes out of some grand old book, and sometimes pleasant pages of modern literature. And there were times when, after prolonged study of a sermon for the coming Sunday, he would rise up in thorough dissatisfaction and disgust at all the result of his long head-and-heart-aching labour, ready to tear the manuscript into pieces; but first he would call her, and installing her in her own chair, would read it to her, to help in judging what the proper effect should be. And often, in reading, the inspiration which had set him to work at first on that particular subject, but which had somehow disappeared, perhaps in the process of critical investigation which one text and another might require, would return, and he would gently dismiss her and sit down to his task again, beginning *de novo*, and writing as fast as the pen could move.

Writing these lines as memory dictates, I am suddenly reminded of a poem I remember liking when I first read it—"The New Wife's Introduction to the Old Study"—and I lay down my pen to look at it again. It occurs in the "Memorials of Theophilus Trinal, by Thomas T. Lynch;" that Christian thinker and lyrist whom the *odium theologicum* of a sour and narrow orthodoxy once sought to immolate, thinking, no doubt, to do God service. Ah! here it is. I think I will just give my readers the last two verses:—

"Your household wisdom, lady dear,
 I value not the less,
 That you a heart and intellect
 Cultured well possess;
 So all the woman in the wife
 Unites my home to bless.
 Sweet are thy face and form, and sweet
 Thy conjugal caress;
 And sweet thy piety and sense,
 And sweet thy gentleness.

"Here much and often, lady dear,
 I hope to work for you;
 And for my God, and for the world,
 In careful studies true.
 And you shall ever help me, love,
 To keep the right in view,
 And ever to my growing thought
 Your word shall be as dew;
 And he who join'd us heart and hand
 Will bless us hitherto."

I told my reader in the last chapter how, on the very wedding-day, when Mr. Langston brought his bride to her new home, he, after a while, left her alone in her own chamber. Well, that room was just over the study, and so had the same aspect. The window was what they call a casement, and the jasmine, which, combined with honeysuckle, covered the trellis verandah of the front door, climbed up and round the window, that overlooked the garden and the fields beyond, and caught the silver line of the river in the distance. Well, that chamber seemed to have even tenderer sanctities hallowing it than the study itself. For I know not what miracles (so to speak, not without some thought) were not wrought there. In process of time—to use a phrase from the most ancient writer we have (your pardon, my dear Dr. Colenso, but I have looked at it as well as you)—in process of time then, I say, in this very chamber, lo, another manifestation of the one great, deep, unfathomable mystery of all—LIFE! Besides the manly voice of the husband, and the soft voice of the wife, there is heard a feeble cry, and a babe lies on a mother's breast. I shall no more call her Mary now. Her husband may, but not I. A new reverence swathes her. She has passed into still a new world, and knows all the strange thoughts and feelings and has all that marvellous insight which only a woman can have, and she only when her God has spoken to her out of heaven, saying, "Take this child, life of thy life, soul of thy soul, and nurse it well for ME."

A great awe fell on Mr. Langston when his first-born was put into his arms, and he knew the meaning of that new name which the God and Father of all had now written—not, indeed, on his brow, but in his heart. All philosophy, all history, all poetry, all religion, even, seemed at once instinct with new meanings, and to unfold new depths. And house and home and life and daily work were all—as by a divine volition which needed only to say, Let light be, and light is—softly, silently, but surely, and in an instant, lifted up to a higher level. Forthwith he better knew the heart of God. And all the voices of Hebrew prophets, which God had of old time used to try and teach men to spell out His divine Fatherhood, became changed as into the voices of that multitude of the heavenly host who once, on the moon-lit plains of the City of David, announced the great evangel of a birth which should bring glory to God in highest, and peace and goodwill to men on earth.

One fervent quiet kiss, of mingled love and reverence and sympathy and fear and hope, on the pale lips of the new-made mother, and he committed the all-unconscious babe—this new and marvellous link between them two—to her arms, and hastened away; for, like Joseph in the dear old Hebrew story, he

could not refrain himself. That was a strangely solemn day to him. There was none like it before or after. The quintessence of a hundred Sabbaths distilled its sanctity and stillness on his heart. As if angel wings, in their swift ministry of love, had softly brushed him as they passed, he was more conscious of the nearness of the spiritual; and, as if his eyes had been purged by more than euphrasy and rue, he saw more nearly to the heart of the open secret of the universe. A whole volume of prayer and hope was now concentrated into the words—*My FATHER!* And when, in after days and nights, the child ailed and was suffering, and he nursed it to soothe it and relieve the mother—and when, later on, one little mishap and another befel it, and it came crying to nestle in his arms, God gave to him a new and precious revelation of the meaning of the old words, “Like as a father pitieth his children, so doth the LORD pity them that fear Him.” Aye, friends, there is many another medium of inspiration—and of revelation, too, for that matter—than some folks wot of. Blessed is the man whose eye is open, and his heart; for in ten thousand (so-called) common and familiar things he shall see God.

Now if any mother, or maiden aunt—who is often a sort of quasi-mother—or nurse, should read these sentences (and I flatter myself many will) she will be struck with one great, and, as she will deem it, strange and stupid omission. “Bless me,” she will exclaim—I am sure she will—“bless me, why the man has not told us whether it was a boy or a girl!” Ah! that’s just like me, I know. Upon my word, ma’am, I did not think of it. At first, you know, it does not seem to matter much, does it now? We men call the little wonder a child, and that sufficeth. But then I ought to have remembered that every one of Eve’s daughters refuses to rest in the general, and imperatively demands the particular, as that first lady (true lady, too, I warrant, and true queen), when she recognized the birth of her first-born, at the same time recognized the sex, and exclaimed, I have gotten a man from the Lord. Well, then, Mrs. Langston—this is the first time I have called her so—could not adopt the words of Eve. Ask why? Give it up? Because it was a daughter.

And the weeks passed, and the young mother came forth from her chamber—with paler cheek, it may be, but heavenlier countenance. For the couch of transient pain had been to her a little Tabor, or mount of transfiguration. And now what new cares and duties and services and pleasures began! This babe by careful nurture to be unfolded into childhood—into girlhood if it please God—and, if it please Him, into womanhood. And soon, of course, Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher must come and behold; approaching, after a long journey, star-led (for there are other

guiding stars than the one which led the Magi to the Babe of Bethlehem)—with busy heart and longing eyes, approaching the cradle, to gaze long and wistfully on their Mary's child. And he may smoke his pipe in his son-in-law's study, while the mother, thus promoted to the dignity of a grandmother, feels that her daughter "is become as one of us," as the old record has it. However, my readers need not fear that I am going to dwell on the details of early parent-hood, albeit I am sure that, if "a divinity doth hedge a king," as Shakspeare says, there is, quite as truly, a divinity doth hedge a babe, and poetry throws its golden light on crib and cradle. The poet needs not wander far, far away, to the purple moors, or heaven-kissing hills, or the everlasting mountains. The beauty of creation derives its very existence from the mind that contemplates it; and, see whatever we may, we receive back little that we do not bring. And I venture to submit that all the little trifling incidents (as we deem them) of domestic life, only need to be looked at with true eyes, from a true standing point, in order to yield up unguessed poetry to true hearts. Aye, from the very cutting of the teeth—

"Delicate little pearl-like wedges,
All transparent at the edges,"—

to the time when "the grinders cease because they are few," our life and home are, if we will, full of poetry. But I am no poet, my reader, "only a prosaist," as Thomas Carlyle says, with great need, perhaps of heed that I do not degenerate from prose into prosy. What a difference a letter can make!—prose, prosy; reminding one of the difference which, though so vast, so immeasurable, many pious excellent people fail to see—often refuse to see—between good and—goody.

Well, the little human fairy grew from day to day, and had to be taught to utter articulate sounds; as—I should not wonder—we ourselves (when fairly new-born into that other world behind the veil, into which that now aged midwife, Death, introduces us) shall need to be taught to speak the language of the strange new country. If the reader knows the original "John Search"—the much pilfered from and little acknowledged Abraham Tucker—he will be reminded of "The Vision." And, in case he does not, I should like to apply a little pleasant stimulant to his acquaintance, and so will, by way of allowable parenthetical digression (which I can afford, for I hate hurry), give him a paragraph from "The Light of Nature." You must know he has passed into the next state, and been kindly taken charge of by his friend John Locke, who undertakes to initiate him into the new strange laws of being that there obtain:—

"It would be tedious to relate all the particular lessons he

gave me ; let it suffice to say that he proceeded much in the same manner we teach children to read, instructing me first how to form the sound of letters, then syllables, and afterwards words. But I found the most difficulty with diphthongs, vowels preceding one another, and syllables having as much vowel as consonant. I could not say chariot, nor extraordinary, but charrit and extodny, like the ladies, nor beloved or moveth, but blovd and moves, like most young parsons in reading the Exhortation : nor could I presently get the knack of joining my words into one continued sentence ; for in my first essays, making a kind of staccato music, there seemed a stop between every sound ; so he was forced to begin with sentences that we should account the most harsh. The first he tried me upon was that line of Ausonius :—

“ ‘ Sic mihi nux, nox, nix, nex, fuit ante diem : ’

“ Then we went to Drayton’s ‘ Court of Fayrie ’ :—

“ ‘ Hop and Mop and Drop so clear,
Pip and Trip and Skip that were
To Mab, their sovereign, ever dear,
Her special maids of honour.
Fib and Tib, and Pinck and Pin,
Tick and Quick, and Jill and Jin,
Tit and Nit, and Wap and Win,
The train that wait upon her.’

“ But he brought me pretty soon to Pope’s harmonious versification :—

“ ‘ While melting music steals upon the sky,
And softened sounds along the waters die,
Smooth flow the waves, the breezes gently play,
Belinda smiles, and all the world is gay : ’

“ Then to the Italian of Tasso :—‘ Ed al pavone spiegar la pompa de l’occhiute piume.’ Virgil’s ‘ Avertens, rosea cervice refulsit, Ambrosiæque comæ divinum vertice odorem Spiravere ; pedes vestis defluxit ad inos, et vera incessu patuit Dea ; ’ and lastly, to some flowing Greek words, as ‘ Genet argurioio bioio,’ and ‘ Met okeanoio roaon.’ ”

And the little creature had to be taught—think of that—to say “ Father ” and “ Mother ; ” and marvellous appeared to delighted parents the odd sounds the little tot uttered, and which became dear household words. But what home is not full of these precious little terms, which convey so much to just two or three, and are but unmeaning stupidities to all outside the charmed circle.

In the account of Christ’s life, as given to us by “ the beloved physician,” we are told that the angel Gabriel—whom we seem

to know tolerably well by reason of his frequent visits to this little pocket planet of ours—presented himself more than once to announce a coming birth. So he came to good old Zacharias, and so he came to the maid of Nazareth. Now, I have no certain means of knowing that the friendly Gabriel knew his way to Bablyk-Hythe as well as to Jerusalem and Nazareth. But then, neither have I any doubt of it. For though these gracious “ministers of His that do His pleasure” wrap their robes of invisibility about them more tightly and uniformly than they used, yet I take it they are quite as near to us, and quite as friendly. The reader, however, needs not fear I am off for another digression into the angel world. No; I intend to keep on *terra firma*. And, indeed, there was no absolute necessity for my introducing this particular angel at all—the Angel of Annunciation—only it suddenly occurred to me that to suggest that the lily-bearer (there may be a celestial heraldry, you know) five separate times, after this first, greeted our Lady of the Gables, would be a not unpleasant way of intimating that to this extent, in the course of years, the old Eden blessing rested on our friends. At all events, it is seemlier for a Christian man thus to weave into his life the name of Gabriel, than to say, five times would a Grecian matron in her place have invoked Ilithyia, and a Roman, Lucina. And yet, why any periphrasis at all? Why go beating about the bush? Why not plainly say in good every-day English that, in the course of time, Mr. and Mrs. Langston had five other children born to them? Well, my readers may take their choice of the modes of putting. They now know the fact; and, on the whole, to have got through the birth of half-a-dozen children in a single paragraph cannot be called dawdling over it, at all events.

Yes, two boys and four girls, like olive plants, grew up in that happy home. And each child seemed to have come out of “The Silences, and the Immensities, and the Eternities” (as speaketh the oracle at Chelsea), to deepen and make more tender the heart of the parents. And thus also to make them, it may be, a broader mark for the arrow that flieth by day, and more open to the terror by night, and the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noon-day.

By-and-by a quite new piece of furniture was brought into the house, and very gently carried upstairs into the room which for more than four years now had been called Little Milly’s. But, though brought and placed there, it was not intended to remain. Yet, while it remained, it seemed the central object in the whole house. Everyone was constantly coming to look at it; and it had the strange property of making everyone look

thoughtful and hushed. It was—but was not called—a casket; neither pretty nor precious in itself, but contained a precious treasure too. But the sight of it made the tears flow afresh—for it was little Milly's coffin. Silver grey was the cloth that covered it, and very spotlessly white was the lining; and there lay, like the first blossom of spring that an untimely frost has loosened from the parent stem, their first-born—their darling Tot—their precious, precious child! And now there was for the parents another sacred spot on the scarred surface of the earth. And many and many a night, when the rain was falling, the wakeful mother, in thought, was beside that little mound, which the kindly green turf soon covered, and those blessed little earth-stars, the daisies (in which a Burns and a Wordsworth can find so much poetry), made very pleasant. Let us thank God for the grass and the crimson-tipped flowers with which He ordains His angel Nature to beautify the lowly resting-places of our beloved ones. But the angel of death, in carrying away the child, so touched with his sharp arrow in passing the parents themselves, that they bore the mark of his visit ever after. Mr. Langston's brow was paler, and close observers noticed a line or two about the eyes which had not been there before. And a deeper but more solemn tenderness enshrined itself in the voice and whole manner of the mother.

And the inevitable years passed on, and our young friends, whose earliest love passages we noted, and whose marriage bells we heard peal so merrily, had come into middle life; and cares, and duties, and troubles, and disappointments, and anxieties had begun to tell upon them. It was seldom the mother could find time for those precious half-hours together in the study. The nursery claimed her; sometimes the sick chamber. The wedding-dress had long long since faded and vanished, and life would have been as prosy and common-place as so many find (or make) it, if it had not been for the poetry of the affections, and the deepening instincts of immortality.

The eldest boy, Alec, at sixteen, was tall and strong and fresh-coloured, with a fine open brow and a bright clear eye—*puer ingenui vultus*—and the mother watched him with all a mother's pride. He was, although her third child, her first son, and often she leaned on his arm on the Sunday, going or returning from the House of Prayer, when perhaps his ministerial duties for the moment kept her husband from her side. And it would have been hard to say which of his parents the boy most fondly turned to. He was "his mother's boy," she sometimes said, not a little gladly. But he was his father's companion in many a long ramble, and he knew all his father's books, and people said he was growing up the very image of Mr. Langston. And his

father had taught him, not only Greek and Latin and such things, but to speak the truth and scorn deceit, and despise meanness, and to love goodness and purity, and to reverence God and his parents, and all noble and good men, and to be kind to everybody, especially to the aged and the poor. And he had taught him—to the scandal of some over-righteous members of his congregation—(and especially of rival congregations)—to row and to fence, and many such things; so that the boy was pretty much what the father had been at his age. And he was looking forward to entering upon life, as it is called, as if that had not been entered on years ago. And over and over again the question arose, what should be done with the lad? Sometimes it was hinted to the father that “perhaps his son would take to the ministry.” But at such an intimation it was observed that the father shook his head significantly, and more than once the suggestion drew from him a sad sigh. For fair as had been the promise of his opening ministry at Bablyk-Hythe, his experiences, on the whole, had not been such as to make him wish that a son of his should pass through life under the same conditions. For himself, indeed, he had no regrets, being both willing and able to pay the price which was exacted for the noble privilege of preaching a really glorious gospel; but unless Alec were, not merely a devotedly religious youth, but endowed with more of the true prophet spirit and more toughness of moral fibre and more robustness of character than is at all common, Mr. Langston used to confess to the mother that he would rather see him following the meanest occupation that was honourable than be a Dissenting minister. And the mother fully sympathized with the feeling, and earnestly hoped that her boy would grow up to be an honourable Christian man, indeed, but be content to glorify God and serve his generation in some secular pursuit.

Edith was eighteen months older than Alec, and since little Milly's death, had been the eldest of the family. Of her we shall have more to say by-and-by. At this time she was a fair, soft, blue-eyed lassie of eighteen, with soft brown hair that, except in the sunlight, looked dark as the ash-buds before they open. Little Letty came after Alec, a child of infinite fun and frolic, whose merry ringing laugh made mirthful music all the livelong day. A thorough romp was Letty. But yet as Martha—(for the servant who first received Mrs. Langston, on her coming to the Gables as a bride, stayed on and on with them, and never thought of telling her mistress “to suit herself that day month”)—as Martha used to say—catching the child up in her arms a dozen times a day, when she was younger, and smothering her with kisses—“she was as good as gold, that she was.”

Freddy was a little round dumpling of a child, with curly hair, and "was never hurt if he tumbled down ever so." And tumble about he did. He was sometimes called the pet; for he was the youngest that survived—one bud having been early nipped, and been laid beside little Milly.

And so these four grew up, and Milly was a memory of the past; but not a memory faded. The parents would not have admitted that the memory had grown fainter even. No; not for the world. But they could speak of her to Edith, who did not remember her, and to the other children, who had never known her; and speak without a sigh, except, indeed, now and then. But on an ebony bracket, in that sacredest chamber of all, where Mrs. Langston had first knelt as a bride, there was a little marble model of a tomb, and on it a name,—

"MILLICENT ANNIE LANGSTON,"—

and a date; and, I think, a text or motto, but this I forget. Let us hope, however, that our friend is not going to repeat this plan of keeping constantly before his eyes a memorial of his loss. For who knows whether, if so, the ebony brackets may not in time come to be too many?

One day his mind was most painfully impressed by a circumstance, which, I think, I must not mention, but which put most vividly and distressingly before him the moral dangers to which his boy would necessarily be exposed when he went into the world. And as he saw the snares prepared for the feet of unwary youth, and, unseen himself, gazed fondly on the frank countenance of the modest unsuspecting lad, and being perhaps, at the moment, in an almost too sensitive mood—perhaps, indeed, somewhat morbid—the father, inly sighing, said, almost unconsciously, "Oh, that some kind angel would stoop down and bear my boy away from all the hateful perils of this wicked world!" I daresay some such a prayer has been half-unconsciously breathed by many a parent. Mr. Langston, however, would not by any means have uttered it deliberately on his knees, in thoughtful appeal to Him "who heareth and answereth prayer." For he was too true a man to wish to withdraw himself from the conflict appointed to man, and knew that his boy, too, must pass through trial to strength and victory. Be that as it may, the father's heart breathed the momentary wish, which he often, afterwards, recalled with a sigh that almost spoke of self-reproach. For within a week all was anxiety in the minister's home, and there were hushed footsteps and low murmurings in the boy's chamber; and then the strange prayer, so involuntarily wrung from the father's heart, was answered but too truly for the affections; for the boy's voice would never more be heard,

and the mother would never more lean on his arm. The death of his noble boy, while severely felt by both parents, was such a blow to the father, that the stricken wife had to exert herself to sustain her husband, who did not at once find the support and consolation in his affliction which he had often administered to others. His very life seemed to have been bound up in that of his boy, and there were not wanting those of his flock who made harsh reflections on what they called "the weakness of his faith."

But he must learn to bear trials, for others were in reserve. And that year, 18—, would, as long as he should live, stand out in his memory as the *annus tristis* of his life. The spring of it had been fair as ever. The earth had re-clothed herself in her softest green; flowers sprung up in the garden as fresh as if they had grown from Eden seeds. The arbour where, in our opening chapter, we found our friend sitting sad and disturbed, with a disquieting letter in his hand, had been the pleasant scene of two or three birthday festivals. But before the year was out, all the beauty was gone from nature; flowers had no loveliness; the sky seemed like a funeral pall, and the sunshine and the singing of birds a cruel mockery. Verily mortals had need so to know God as indeed to find therein eternal life. For our own poor sakes we have need so to know Him as to find in the Everlasting Father a full "portion for the soul," as the marvellous Hebrew worthies in those old days found. For however long we may be spared the sadder experiences of life, we may be sure a cup is mingled which will sooner or later be put into our trembling hand; and the "insatiate archer," at an hour when we think not, may be fitting his arrow to the string. But "blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, —an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

ECCE HOMO!*

SUCH is the significant title of one of the most note-worthy books published for many a day; and before attempting to give our readers some idea of its purpose and method, we propose,

* *Ecce Homo*: A Survey of the Life and Work of Jesus Christ. Third edition. London: Macmillan & Co. 1866.

in the present article, to indicate a few of the more characteristic features that soon reveal themselves.

The book partly belongs, in *sub-design*, at least, perhaps to the class of Apologetics. At all events, it is somewhat of the nature of the early Apologia. But there is no polemic in it. If any one should ask against what foe the good knight arms himself, the answer must be, that the good knight, though bearing in every feature and revealing in every movement that his knight-hood is of the noblest, stands in the robes of peace, and looks as though the *mêlée* were unknown, and shield and spear were but the toys of a long past and well-nigh forgotten youth. The author knows of no opponent, is conscious of no gainsayer. It is plain enough, however, that as—

"Si Lyrus non lyrasset,
Lutherus non saltasset;"

So, if a host of men and things had not long enveloped the idea of Christianity in clouds of dust, and if, more recently, Strauss and Rénan and others had not put, not only Christianity, but its very Founder even, into their crucible or witches' cauldron, and distilled and subtilized all into vapour, with only a worthless residuum left—a mere *caput mortuum*—and if others had not sought to repel what was mischievous by worse than questionable methods, till at last the imbroglio was getting unendurable and indeed ominous, this word of Pilate's would not have stood as the title of a book by our present author. Yet, from the first page to the last, we do not meet with the name of a single opponent, nor, indeed, of a single fellow-helper to the truth. The writer speaks out all his thought without a solitary reference to the "*Vie de Jesus*," or the varying editions of the "*Leben Jesu*," or to the Comtean positivism, or the Colenso controversy, or any other. Not a word about Popery or Protestantism, Anglicanism or Evangelicalism, High Church, Low Church, or Broad Church, the Establishment or Dissent, Orthodoxy or Heterodoxy. Not a single church-father, nor famous divine, nor heretic of any age, no infidel or sceptic, or defender of the faith once crosses the field of vision. It is marvellous how such a man, knowing, as we are sure he knows, every phase of modern ecclesiastical and religious thought, and writing with such a purpose, could, with so much profound quietness of resolve and perfect success, ignore, from beginning to end of his book, both friend and foe alike. But the effect on the reader is most grateful. The writer has found and appropriated the "lodge" that Cowper sighed for. We find ourselves beside a placid lake in the bosom of a mountain, whose unruffled surface reflects the blue sky and the solemn stars. The author thinks aloud as quietly as Adam might have

done in his garden before the serpent hissed and stung. Night is not more still; Orion and the Pleiades not more peaceful. A goodly octavo of three hundred and thirty pages, without a single allusion to any of the men or the controversies of the day, or the circumstances which we may be sure have called forth the production. Did anyone ever know the like of it? Verily, although the Hebrew sage disbelieved the possibility, there is, after all, some new thing under the sun. And in such a day as this of controversy, contradiction, denial—here and there and everywhere, in every newspaper and in every social circle, in the Senate, in the Church, in the schools, in the world, till the very stars in their courses seem to be fighting also—there is an indescribable charm in this masterly reticence. We feel how much of blessed quality there may be in mere abstinence, in silence; and we say, notwithstanding the cant that has been canted about it, after all, silence is golden! And if by no other token, surely by this reticence our author is a master.

Who is he, then? for curiosity is piqued, and perhaps something deeper and kinder than curiosity. The book is anonymous, like the Book of Job. The writer makes no sign. Report has of course been busy, and many conjectures, we understand, have been hazarded, but the secret is well kept. We can hear of no one who has "ploughed with his heifer," as Samson said when his riddle was answered through the betrayal of his confidence. At first we were ready with a guess of our own, and almost said, "*Aut — aut nullus*," but subsequently consented to wait for the clue. We may note, however:—He is a scholar to whom scholarship is as the air he breathes. He has not to hunt up his references—half-remembered sentences that may perhaps illustrate his meaning. As evidently, too, history is his forte; history as philosophy teaching by example. Though he writes on Christ and Christianity, we should think that, not the pulpit, but the cathedra is his place; and that, happily for his readers perhaps, he has not been accustomed to put his convictions or ideas in sermon fashion. With him we are plainly away from the *professional* in religion, which is no small gain, and which may possibly account, to some extent, for the singular and utter absence of the *odium theologicum*. A bishop could not have written the book; no—not for the promise of the primacy. Nor could any clergyman that we ever heard of. For what clergyman can ever lay aside his gown and bands, and be a man among men—a Christian among Christians? But the Canons and the Articles are not hung about his neck, and riveted on hand and foot. He is free from all those painful dyspeptic symptoms which no man can escape (or avoid exhibiting) who has bolted the Prayer-book whole. He neither blesses nor

curses, but as the sower steps right onward casting forth his seed.

Reading his pages, one is reminded of the Greeks that came up to Jerusalem to worship, and wished "to see Jesus." Fancy a Greek, as familiar with Plato as schoolboys used to be with Robinson Crusoe, with Aristotle, as John Stuart Mill is with Hamilton, knowing Homer as an intelligent admirer of Tennyson knows the Idylls of the King, and the tragedians as Macready Shakspeare. Then, through earnest love of truth, let such a one have mastered all that the noblest Hebrew could teach him, and have the Historians, and Poets, and Prophets of Judæa at his fingers' ends. Then show him, in a more than magic mirror, the gradual development of infantine Christianity into a vast multiform modern Christendom; but, having shown, withdraw the mirror, and let the vision for a time fade, or at least recede; and then let such a man, thus prepared, go into the wilderness of Judæa, take his stand beside the Jordan, and hear and ponder and digest the preaching and object of John the Baptist. Let him mark the approach of the wonderful stranger from Galilee; note the baptism of Jesus and the accompanying phenomena; follow into the wilderness of temptation, and thence—intelligently but candidly—watch him day and night unto the tragic end, and then behold—and be himself more or less irradiated by—the glory of the new morning that breaks on the world by "the resurrection from the dead." Such a man might very possibly give us an idea of Christ's object and method which neither pope nor prelate would put his seal to; which no "General Assembly," nor "Methodist Conference," nor Baptist or Congregational "Union" would give him a vote of thanks for; but which might, nevertheless, be well worth the candid and grateful study of the best of them.

The reader will soon perceive that as he is away from all controversies and opponents, and has not his attention diverted by any intimations of heresies or heterodoxies, so there is no anxious heed to, or recognition of, orthodoxy. And indeed even the ordinary language of theology—the set religious phrases and time-honoured formulas on which "Sermons," and "Discourses," and "Addresses," and "Lectures," and "religious books," for the most part, ring everlasting changes—will be gratefully or painfully missed, according to the mental quality and tone of the reader. For our own part we rejoice in the freshness hereby secured. For to a great extent the familiar words and puttings—which, in many quarters, are looked for as keenly as the Gileadites listened for the *sib* or *shib*-boleth at the passage of the Jordan—have become, as John Foster says, the tombs rather than the symbols of living ideas. Words have been aptly called, the

counters of wise men, and the money of fools. If there be a sufficient reason, therefore, a wise and earnest teacher will say the same thing in quite other words. You may put a thought in pulpit fashion and utter it *ore rotundo*; or you may put it to a friend at your club in the familiar language of everyday life; or to a scholar in modes which his Plato and Aristotle have made the most significant; while even for the many—the million—there may be wonderful advantage in freshness. When coin is so worn that the impress is effaced, it is recalled to the mint, that it may re-issue, the same gold or silver, indeed, but fitter for its purpose. And especially, according to a high authority, is new wine best put into new bottles. And although there may be a not unreasonable presumption against any man who, towards the twentieth century of the Christian era, should profess that the true reading of Christ and His purpose and method had been reserved for him yet, at the same time, so “knowledge-passing” is “the love of Christ”—and, therefore, the full character and meaning of Christ—that, to the very eve of the world’s last day, every fresh student, who comes to sit at his feet with a disciplined intellect, a well-furnished mind, a healthful conscience, and the teachableness of a child, capable at the same time of reverence and love and enthusiasm, may learn something heretofore undiscerned, or at least unpointed out, which he may be expected to utter in words of his own.

The author of “*Ecce Homo*”—not so much of set design perhaps, as naturally—has written like a man to whom the Republic of Plato and the Ethics of Aristotle are more familiar than the Oxford Tracts and the voluminous literature they have given birth to, or the antidotal evangelicalism of Dean Close and Canon McNeill. And there are doubtless men of sounder understandings and broader evangelicalism than these, who will have their misgivings excited by the utter absence of all the pass-words of all the churches. This, however, is a feature of the book which, by some readers at all events, will be felt as an added charm. For we have companied with Jesus so long in Jerusalem, and Cana, and Capernaum, that if He invites us to cross, not the sea of Tiberias to the wild coasts of Gadara, but the Great Sea and the Ægean to Greece, that he may discourse to us on the banks of Ilyssus, or beneath the plane trees of Athens, we can feel grateful for the change, and shall return to the city of David and the valley of the Kidron refreshed and strengthened. Let us talk Greek awhile, and then come back to Aramaic. The effect may be stimulant to heart and brain.

It will be obvious that, to be read with either pleasure or ad-

vantage, the book demands to be read with candour, by such as can now and then lay aside some of their ever ready (possibly too ready) tests. Especially would we advise all our infallibles, of whatsoever church, to refrain from touching it. For the man who has nothing to learn, nothing to unlearn, nothing to change, nothing to modify even (and such a one belongs to a mighty host, with flags flying and brazen trumpets sounding), will only misread, we fear, and misinterpret. And he whose zeal is kindled, not so much for goodness and righteousness and a true life, as for the particular views of Christ and Christianity which, by adopting, he has come to identify with his own blessed "self," and against "the enemies of the faith" (meaning *his* faith)—who, like Balak, wants a prophet chiefly "to curse his enemies," or who, however sincere a Christian, has not advanced beyond the Samaritan village where the Sons of Thunder wanted to call down fire from heaven—such a reader may deem the stately calmness and impartiality with which the inquiry into Christ's claims and object is conducted a grave deficiency. Especially will the studied understating of the truth on some points seem to such a one a faithless surrender. For having before his mind, we presume, a class whom he especially aims to reach, the author is sometimes content to draw conclusions decidedly short of what the fairly indisputable premisses would obviously justify. It is not everybody who can receive the saying of Hesiod, that sometimes a part is more than the whole. And yet how often a little is more than much. Again and again we see that our author might, as a logician, claim more than he has done. But we are well pleased that it should be so. Give us a thoroughly reliable major and minor, and we can dispense with the corollary; while there are readers who will be all the better perhaps for not having it too forcibly obtruded. As there is an over-doing which proves an un-doing, so there is an under-doing which is the most effective doing. A seed-truth dropped into a living soul will grow. We have faith in seeds, and can sometimes prefer seed-corn to baked loaves.

We know of no party organ that will be likely to offer the author excessive gratitude, for he is no partisan. High Church will treat the book with silent contempt; for, alas, there is no ecclesiasticalism in it, no priestism; and what is worse, no room for any, either! Low Church will see in it nothing but "rationalism," and a most suspicious enthusiasm for a "morality," which, if it were generally adopted, would perhaps shiver certain cherished institutions and forms to pieces, and render utterly unbelievable some favourite dogmas. And even Evan-

gelical Nonconformity will possibly feel somewhat like the early disciples, "Master, we saw one casting out demons in Thy name, and we forbade him, for *he followeth not us !*" And yet the advocates for the freedom of religion from secular patronage and control may certainly recognize the author as necessarily a friend, and a friend who is a host in himself; while the Baptists will surely stroke their beards over the paragraph in which he states the meaning and imperativeness of "the ordinance." But not a few who love to regard themselves as the Abdiels of Evangelicalism, and to vaunt themselves its pre-destined and only faithful champions, will, if they read, find it necessary to get rid of the overflowings of their disapprobation in the pages of the *Record*, or kindred vehicles.

Our readers will consider this a rather long introduction to a book whose object and method we have not yet begun to describe. But we said at the beginning that, to our minds, this is a very note-worthy book, and we wish to bespeak for the thoughtful perusal of it that just candour to which not only is it entitled, but without which the reader may miss the good he might otherwise gain from it.

That it is a full and complete and every-way sufficient and satisfactory account of "the whole matter," we do not pretend to believe—indeed, we are far from believing; but, for our own part, we read in between the lines, and supplement from our own resources what we may deem its deficiencies. And besides, do any of us who have come to this third quarter of the nineteenth century with our eyes and ears thoroughly open, pretend to know any one system of theology, or set of Articles, or organization of Christianity (church), which gives that full and perfect "rest" to the whole man which we are sure is to be found at the feet of Christ Himself, rightly understood and loyally and lovingly received? Are not, at all events, many thoroughly earnest spirits of the present day on some grave questions notoriously in a transition state?—intelligently and conscientiously dissatisfied with much that is; believing firmly in happier and more glorious possibilities, and confident that the Church of the future—though as yet they see but as through a glass, obscurely—will be, must be, something far more nobly satisfactory to the whole united mind and heart than anything in the past or present. The most intelligent and reverent of this class, those who yearn the most profoundly for "more life, and fuller" for themselves and all around, who abhor all divorce, or even separation, between intellect and piety, reason and faith, religion and morality, devoutness and activity, zeal for personal salvation and self-forgetful interest in the world at large—will hail the writer as a fellow-helper to the truth, and find his con-

tribution towards a better understanding of the Master and His object healthful as the breezes on the mountain side.

And some readers, no doubt, will find it in their hearts to thank the author that while Christ, His object and method, are the theme, he has not thought to get into clearer light by diving into the obscure recesses of dusty libraries for a various reading or two. Nothing with him depends on a fine and subtle criticism of particles, though we know full well that this, too, has its use. He would seem to have imbibed the heresy of the Oxford Professor of Greek, who actually believes that a little common sense is as precious a requisite for the right reading of the New Testament as Greek itself, and can even be less safely dispensed with. How often does the English reader find himself at fault by a favourite method of some theologians, who cleverly make everything to depend on some very minute criticism, which, alas! can only be conveyed in, to him, cabalistic characters! But in the present volume we are clear of all this. We have not even a critical estimate of the four Gospels. The writer takes them for what they may be worth, as he would take Thucydides or Josephus—(indeed, it is significant that the motto on the title-page is the well-known testimony of Tacitus, "*Auctor nominis ejus Christus Tiberio imperitante per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio affectus erat*")—and finds that a disciplined common sense is an admirable organon—as, indeed, it need be, or how are "the poor," the ἀργάμαυροί καὶ ἰδιῶται, to be quite sure of "the Gospel" that by Christianity is "preached unto them?" We have positively at times been ready to say, with a meaning that derives its emphasis from the *Dryasdusts* of the church, "Blessed are the poor." "The college of fishermen" was no such bad college after all, perhaps. In this volume we get, too, an additional illustration of the advantage of putting a picture to a sufficient distance, instead of poking into it with the eye an inch from the canvas. Hold what theory you deem most satisfactory about inspiration, infallible guidance, and the like, only allow to our documents the value which may attach to Cæsar's Commentaries, or the Agricola or Germania of Tacitus, and it is enough. Here these very ancient documents are, and on the whole and in general they are trustworthy enough. We have *some* reliable testimony, at all events. Tacitus and Pliny are not suspected; and some things Josephus said are plainly not interpolations. And here is this living Christendom of to-day, as a fact (the only extant civilization which does not show symptoms of decay, but is still vital, progressive, going forth conquering and evidently to conquer); and it has a history, which, on the whole, is legible enough; and it had a beginning, and a Founder, who must have been pretty

much what He was early represented to be, and to claim to be. A French Empire in the year 1866, with a Napoleon the Third, pre-supposes a Napoleon the First, logically demands a General Bonaparte, *le petit Caporal*, Waterloo and St. Helena. Mahometanism involves a Prophet of Mecca; even Mormonism a founder: how much more Christianity a Christ. The Christ of the Christian Church is the logic of Christendom. Let the problem be—Given a Christendom (inclusive of all moral heroisms and martyrdoms, from Polycarp to Williamu;* of all “variations,” from Hildebrand to George Fox, from Origen and Augustine, Athanasius and Arius, to Socinus, Wesley, and Irving; of all nations, from the Jordan to the Tiber, from the Nile to the Volga, the Ganges to the Thames, the “great multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues,” who, in some form or other, call Christ their Lord.) Given a Christendom (we say) to find a Christ: and, rigidly worked out, we confidently affirm the Christ of the Gospels and the Acts to be the result. For even the corruptions of Christianity must be traced to something said or done by the Founder, of which they are the perversion; and even if one factor be human nature, depraved or fanciful, the other factor inexorably demanded is—the Christ. But we are being tempted from our point. We were only desirous of intimating to a class that, independently of the various lines of critical and historical evidence for our Gospel records, there is a broad common-sense path open to us, in which we may walk with great satisfaction; and that (to speak with the moderation which men conscious of occupying an impregnable position prefer to all extreme utterances, choosing to affirm less than they know they might affirm) the general trustworthiness which cannot honestly be denied to the four Gospels, and which even M. Rénan is obliged to concede, abundantly suffices for all the legitimate wants of the truth-loving inquirer; who, if he is on his guard against rashly believing too much, desires to be equally on his guard against the at least equal danger of believing too little.

We are sure it will be an immense relief to many a perplexed reader of Strauss, and Rénan, and others, to find how a master like our author feels he can afford to deal with the subject in this free broad style of handling. And he will feel how poor a thing in comparison is the agglomeration of morsels of objection, on the principles of the bit-by-bit criticism, in such repute with all lovers of the negative, who seem to find the sum of all wisdom and contentment in the “everlasting No!” In this

* So the natives called John Williams, the missionary martyr of Erromanga.

volume, from the first page to the last, all is positive, though without dogmatism ; and preferring to understate rather than to leave an opening for objection, the book is good for much more than it claims. The author reminds us of a famous chess-player, who is perfectly willing to give his opponent any piece he pleases, or half-a-dozen pieces, and knows he can win with a marked pawn.

The author, too, as we need however scarcely add, has looked at the biographical anecdotes—the *Memorabilia* furnished by the Xenophons of the New Testament—with his own eyes, which, also, is not an every-day phenomenon. For, judging from what obtains all but universally, when any new expositor of the Life of Christ sits down to his task, he piles up around him, open, all the expositions that are extant, and spends nineteen-twentieths of his time in comparing and adapting. So rare is it to get any freshness of conception. But the present writer, not ignorant of what others have said, leaves them all behind in their libraries and literary dissecting-rooms, and presses on and mingles with the crowd that is gathered about the Christ, intent on seeing with his own eyes and hearing with his own ears, and so lets the discourse or the incident produce its own effect directly on his quickened soul. And thus, familiar as we may be with the standard authorities from A to Z, we find a freshness which is the result, not of a restless untruthful hankering after novelty, but of a determination to see and hear the Founder of Christianity Himself at first hand. Perhaps, by way of illustration of the author's manner of treating the original records preserved by the Evangelists, we may be allowed to find room for an extract or two. At the same time, the reader must understand that, taken out of their connection, they lose much of their significance. In the first that we offer, the writer is showing "the effect of personal influence in creating virtuous impulses."

"We have insisted upon the effect of personal influence in creating virtuous impulses. We have described Christ's Theocracy as a great attempt to set all the virtue of the world upon this basis, and to give it a visible centre or fountain. But we have used generalities. It is advisable, before quitting the subject, to give a single example of the magical passing of virtue out of the virtuous man into the hearts of those with whom he comes in contact. A remarkable story which appears in St. John's biography, though it is apparently an interpolation in that place, may serve this purpose, and will at the same time illustrate the difference between scholastic or scientific, and living or instinctive virtue. Some of the leading religious men of Jerusalem had detected a woman in adultery. It occurred to them that the case afforded a good opportunity of making an experiment upon Christ. They might use it to discover how he regarded the Mosaic law. That he was heterodox on the subject of that law they had reason to believe ; for he had openly quoted some Mosaic maxims, and declared them at least incomplete, substituting for them new rules of his own, which at

least, in some cases, appeared to abrogate the old. It might be possible, they thought, by means of this woman, to satisfy at once themselves and the people of his heterodoxy. They brought the woman before him, quoted the law of Moses on the subject of adultery, and asked Christ directly whether he agreed with the lawgiver. They asked for his judgment.

"A judgment he gave them, but quite different, both in matter and manner, from what they had expected. In thinking of the 'case' they had forgotten the woman, they had forgotten even the deed. What became of the criminal appeared to them wholly unimportant; towards her crime or her character they had no feeling whatever, not even hatred, still less pity or sympathetic shame. If they had been asked about her, they might probably have answered with Mephistopheles, 'She is not the first;' nor would they have thought their answer fiendish, only practical and business-like. Perhaps they might, on reflection, have admitted that their frame of mind was not strictly moral, not quite what it should be, that it would have been better if, besides considering the legal and religious questions involved, they could have found leisure for some shame at the scandal, and some hatred for the sinner. But they would have argued that such strict propriety is not possible in this world, that we have too much on our hands to think of these niceties, that the man who makes leisure for such refinements will find his work in arrears at the end of the day, and probably also that he is doing injustice to his family and those dependent on him.

"This they might fluently and plausibly have urged. But the judgment of Christ was upon them, making all things seem new, and shining like the lightning from the one end of heaven to the other. He was standing, it would seem, in the centre of a circle, when the crime was narrated, how the adultery had been detected *in the very act*. The shame of the deed itself, and the brazen hardness of the prosecutors, the legality that had no justice, and did not even pretend to have mercy, the religious malice that could make its advantage out of the fall and ruin and ignominious death of a fellow-creature—all this was eagerly and rudely thrust before his mind at once. The effect upon him was such as might have been produced upon many since, but, perhaps, upon scarcely any man that ever lived before. He was seized with an intolerable sense of shame. He could not meet the eye of the crowd, or of the accusers, and, perhaps, at that moment, least of all of the woman. Standing as he did in the midst of an eager multitude that did not in the least appreciate his feelings, he could not escape. In his burning embarrassment and confusion he stooped down so as to hide his face, and began writing with his finger on the ground. His tormentors continued their clamour, until he raised his head for a moment and said, 'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her,' and then instantly returned to his former attitude. They had a glimpse, perhaps, of the glowing blush upon his face, and awoke suddenly with astonishment to a new sense of their condition and their conduct. The older men naturally felt it first and slunk away; the younger followed their example. The crowd dissolved, and left Christ alone with the woman. Not till then could he bear to stand upright; and when he had lifted himself up, consistently with his principle, he dismissed the woman, as having no commission to interfere with the office of the civil judge.

"But the mighty power of living purity had done its work. He had refused to judge a woman, but he had judged a whole crowd. He had awakened the slumbering conscience in many hardened hearts, given them a new delicacy, a new ideal, a new view and reading of the Mosaic law."—Pp. 102—105.

The author, towards the after part of his volume, expounds •

with marvellous insight and subtlety, and yet breadth, the great laws of Mercy and Resentment; and in the course of his admirable exposition, which we apprehend will come to many a reader as a flash of revealing light, or rather like the sun-rise, he seeks partially to illustrate his principle by two instances recorded in the Gospels, and we select this passage simply in illustration of our remark on the writer's determination to see and hear for himself:—

“Christ then undertakes the conversion of sinners. Of his success in this enterprise our biographies, particularly that of St. Luke, contain many examples. Christianity, by giving men a greater interest in each other than they had before, and by weakening the influence of artificial distinctions, and, at the same time, by its intense seriousness, gave those who were influenced by it a keen eye for character, and an insight into human nature, such as is very rarely found in antiquity. The stories of conversion recorded in the Gospels have a liveliness and truth which everyone can in some measure feel, but which are felt ten times as strongly by those who know and consider how perfectly new to literature such sketches were when they appeared. It was by them that the depth and complexity and mystery of the human heart were first brought to light, and their appearance involved a revolution in literature, the results of which are to be traced, not so much in the writers of the long barbaric period which followed their diffusion, as in Dante and Shakspeare. Of these stories we will find room here for two, the one containing the repentance of a man, the other of a woman.

“Zacchæus held a high office under the farmers general, and had become rich. His wealth, however, had not availed to relax the social excommunication under which, with all his fraternity, he lay. Either the Jews of that time were less dazzled by wealth than the Gentiles of the present, or they reflected with indignation that the riches he had amassed had been plundered from themselves. By some means he had heard of Christ, and conceived an intense curiosity to see him. That it was no vulgar curiosity, but that overpowering attraction towards greatness and goodness—that *faith*, which is the germ of all that is good in human character—may be gathered from the sequel of the story. He may have heard it reported that Christ did not, like other religious men, disdain the company of publicans, and that he had condescended to be entertained at their houses. He was rich; he also was able, if only such an honour could be granted him, to entertain Christ. It is for this that riches are enviable, that while the poor must be content with glimpses of the hero or the saint as he passes in the street, the rich can bring him within their doors, and contemplate him at their leisure. But Zacchæus had not the courage to use this privilege of his wealth. His conscience was ill at ease, the stigma of his infamous occupation had entered into his heart. He was afraid to show his wealth to Christ, lest the question should be asked him how it had been gained. He submitted, therefore, to look on among the poor, and to be satisfied with what he could see as the procession passed. But the crowd was dense, and it may be, found a pleasure in elbowing aside the social tyrant who had thus put himself on a level with them. He was short, and saw himself in danger of losing even the passing glimpse of Christ's countenance with which he had resolved to be content. Determined to secure, at least, so much, he ran forward and climbed into a tree which overshadowed the road by which the train was to pass. By this means he saw Christ, and not only so, but

Christ saw him. Zacchæus was not one of the most pitiable of his excommunicated class. He might be hated, but he was successful; he was one of those who might say, '*Populus me sibilat, at mihi plaudo.*' In a word he was a prosperous plunderer, living in abundance among the victims of his rapacity. But Christ was touched by the enthusiasm he displayed, and may have divined and understood the shame which, as we have conjectured, caused him to shrink from a personal interview. Such enthusiasm and shame seemed to Christ the first stirrings of humanity in the publican's heart, and by a single stroke he completed the change he perceived to be beginning, and ripened a half-hopeless yearning into a settled purpose of moral amendment. Without delay, or reserve, or conditions, or rebuke, he gave himself up to the publican. Adopting the royal style, which was familiar to him, and which commends the loyalty of a vassal in the most delicate manner by freely exacting his services, he informed Zacchæus of his intention to visit him, and signified his pleasure that a banquet should be instantly prepared. Such generous confidence put a new soul into Zacchæus; it snapped in a moment the spell of wickedness under which all his better instincts had remained in dull abeyance; and while the crowd murmured at the exceptional honour done to a public enemy, Zacchæus stood forth, and solemnly devoted half his property to the poor, and vowed fourfold restoration to all whom he had wronged.

"This is the repentance of a man. Zacchæus shows no remarkable sensibility; he sheds no tears, he utters no striking reflections. The movement in his mind is strong, but not in the least peculiar or difficult to follow. It is a conflict between common honesty and the instincts of the thief, a conflict in which the former, fighting at great odds, gains a signal victory. Against all the might of inveterate habit, and bad society, and a crushing public prejudice, this man makes head, and by one great effort forces his way back into the class of good citizens and honest men. And this great but simple achievement he gained power to perform, not through reflection and reasoning, not through the eloquence of a preacher, not through supernatural terrors, but through the cordial restoring influence of Mercy. It was Mercy, which is not Pity—a thing comparatively weak and vulgar—but Pity and Resentment blended at the highest power of each, the most powerful restorative agent known in the medicine of the soul; it was Mercy that revealed itself in Christ's words, the Pity slightly veiled under royal grace, the Resentment altogether unexpressed, and yet not concealed, because already too surely divined and anticipated by the roused conscience of the criminal. And Mercy, more powerful than Justice, redeemed the criminal while it judged him, increased his shame tenfold, but increased in the same proportion the wish and courage to amend.

"The second story describes the repentance of a woman. It is a fragment. A woman fallen from virtue, we know not who, entered a room in the house of a Pharisee who was entertaining Christ. We know not particularly what Christ had done for her, but we can conclude generally that he had roused her conscience as he did that of Zacchæus, that he had restored her to virtue by giving her hope, and by inspiring her with an enthusiastic devotion to himself. She threw herself down before him, and embraced his feet, weeping so abundantly over them that she was obliged to wipe them, which she did with her hair. This is the picture presented to us, and we know nothing further of the woman, although tradition has identified her with that Mary Magdalene of whose touching fidelity to Christ in the last scenes of his life so much is recorded. But fragmentary as the story is, it is all-important, as the turning-point in the history of women. Such wisdom is there in humanity, that he who first looked upon his fellow-creatures with sympathetic eyes found himself, as it were, in

another world, and made mighty discoveries at every step. The female sex, in which antiquity saw nothing but inferiority, which Plato considered intended to do the same things as the male only not so well, was understood for the first time by Christ. His treatment brought out its characteristics, its superiorities, its peculiar power of gratitude and self-devotion. That woman who dried with her hair the feet she had bathed in grateful tears, has raised her whole sex to a higher level. But we are concerned with her not merely as a woman, but as a fallen woman. And it is when we consider her as such that the prodigious force and originality of Christ's mercy makes itself felt. For it is probably in the case of this particular vice that justice ripens the slowest and the seldomest into mercy. Most persons in whom the moral sense is very strong are, as we have said, merciful; mercy is in general a measure of the higher degrees of keenness in the moral sense. But there is a limit beyond which it seems almost impossible for mercy, properly so called, to subsist. There are certain vices which seem to indicate a criminality so engrained, or at least so inveterate, that mercy is, as it were, choked in the deadly atmosphere that surrounds them, and dies for want of that hope upon which alone it can live. Vices that are incorrigible are no proper objects of mercy, and there are some vices which virtuous people are found particularly ready to pronounce incorrigible. Few brave men have any pity to spare for a confirmed coward. And as cowardice seems to him who has the instinct of manliness a fatal vice in man, as implying an absence of the indispensable condition of masculine virtue, so does confirmed unchastity in woman seem a fatal vice to those who reverence womanhood. And therefore little mercy for it is felt by those who take a serious view of sexual relations. There are multitudes who think lightly of it, and therefore feel a good deal of compassion for those who suffer at the hands of society such a terrible punishment for it. There are others who can have mercy on it while they contemplate it, as it were, at a distance, and do not realize how mortal to the very soul of womanhood is the habitual desecration of all the sacraments of love. Lastly, there are some who force themselves to have mercy on it out of reverence for the example of Christ. But of those who see it near, and whose moral sense is keen enough to judge of it, the greater number pronounce it incurable. We know the pitiless cruelty with which virtuous women commonly regard it. Why is it that in this one case the female sex is more hard-hearted than the male? Probably because in this one case it feels more strongly, as might be expected, the heinousness of the offence; and those men who criticise women for their cruelty to their fallen sisters do not really judge from the advanced stage of mercy, but from the lower stage of insensibility. It is commonly by love itself that men learn the sacredness of love. Yet though Christ never entered the realm of sexual love, this sacredness seems to have been felt by him far more deeply than by other men. We have already had an opportunity of observing this in the case of the woman taken in adultery. He exhibited on that occasion a profound delicacy of which there is no other example in the ancient world, and which anticipates and excels all that is noblest in chivalrous and finest in modern manners. In his treatment of the prostitute, then, how might we expect him to act? Not, surely, with the ready tolerance of men, which is but laxity; we might expect from him rather the severity of women, which is purity. Disgust will overpower him here, if anywhere. He will say, 'Thy sin's not accidental, but a trade. . . . 'Tis best that thou diest quickly.' There is no doubt that he was not wanting in severity; the gratitude that washed his feet in tears was not inspired by mere goodness. But he found mercy too, where mercy commonly fails even in the

tender hearts of women. And mercy triumphed, where it commonly dies of mere despair.

"These two stories may serve as specimens of Christ's redeeming power. At the same time they exhibit to us, it is plain, the natural working of the enthusiasm of humanity, the essential spirit of Christianity. The latter story in particular has gone to the heart of Christendom. It has given origin, and even a name, to institutions which are found wherever the Christian Church is found, and the object of which is to redeem women that have fallen from virtue. It has given to Christian art the figure of the Magdalen, which when contrasted with the Venus of Greek sculpture, represents in a very palpable manner the change which Christ has wrought in the moral feelings of mankind with respect to women."—Pp. 243—250.

One word on the author's style before we close. It is such as we do not often get in theological or religious books. The language is but the vehicle for the thought, which is lucidity itself. There is no fine writing, no effort, no determination to be clever, or brilliant, or effective. He has thought vigorously and seen clearly, and his moral earnestness governing his intellectual and literary power, the results are given as distinctly as right words can give them.

In our next number we hope to present our readers with an account of the author's idea of Christ's object and method, and till then content ourselves with adding the preface:—

"Those who feel dissatisfied with the current conceptions of Christ, if they cannot rest content without a definite opinion, may find it necessary to do what, to persons not so dissatisfied, it seems audacious and perilous to do. They may be obliged to reconsider the whole subject from the beginning, and placing themselves in imagination at the time when he whom we call Christ bore no such name, but was simply, as St. Luke describes him, a young man of promise, popular with those who knew him, and appearing to enjoy the Divine favour, to trace his biography from point to point, and accept those conclusions about him, not which Church doctors, or even apostles, have sealed with their authority, but which the facts themselves, critically weighed, appear to warrant. This is what the present writer undertook to do for the satisfaction of his own mind, and because, after reading a good many books on Christ, he felt still constrained to confess that there was no historical character whose motives, objects, and feelings remained so incomprehensible to him. The inquiry which proved serviceable to himself may chance to be useful to others. What is now published is a fragment. No theological questions whatever are here discussed. Christ as the creator of modern theology and religion, will make the subject of another volume, which, however, the author does not hope to publish for some time to come. In the meanwhile he has endeavoured to furnish an answer to the question, What was Christ's object in founding the Society which is called by his name, and how is it adapted to that object?"—*Preface.*

THE SACRIFICE OF ISAAC.

A BIBLICAL STUDY.

Few things are more difficult to examine with unbiassed candour than traditional interpretations of historical facts. We are not afraid to subject doctrines to the keenest criticism. They are to a great extent purely subjective. No crucible can be too hot that will help to clear a little of their dross away. But facts are much more sacred things, and rightly so; but unfortunately, the current interpretation is too often wrapt round with the halo of sanctity, which properly belongs to the fact alone. Consequently, we are afraid to approach them, however reverentially, to see what is fact and what fiction, how much is real, how much imaginary. Yet surely there is no reason for such fear, and if on close inspection we have good ground for thinking that some traditional dross has been mistaken for part of the fact itself, there is no harm in saying, this is no part of the fact, but merely a human addition, which it were better to take away.

It is in such a spirit as this we would ask our readers to look with us at one single point connected with our almost universal notion as to the command given to Abraham to sacrifice Isaac his son. We have no wish to shake well-grounded faith, to disturb old convictions, or even unnecessarily to dispel harmless delusion. But with a strong persuasion that God has been dishonoured by our mistaken interpretation of His command—as indeed He is by all our mistakes concerning Him—and also, that the exact truth is always worth seeking, we think the question worth asking, Is it really the fact that God put the new-born faith, and the parental feelings of Abraham to so severe a test, as to demand that he should slay his son?

We must admit that there are few passages which seem on the face of them to present less difficulty than the verse which contains this command: "And he (God) said, take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering, upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." And there are not many passages, in the interpretation of which a greater unanimity prevails. Some of our earliest emotions of pity were bound up with the thought of the venerable patriarch, as he heard the command, or of the little boy (for we always

thought of Isaac as a very little child *) running those weary miles, holding by his father's hand, or carrying the wood that was to build his funeral pyre. And some of our most vivid recollections are of strange thoughts of a God who could give such a command, and serious, though childish questions about His goodness, or His love—questions which we were obliged to stifle, because no one could answer them; for every one told us that God did command it, and no one could tell us why. And we do not find, even now, that commentators are much wiser than they were. They all attempt an explanation, but every one gives a different one from every other; whilst the impression left by them all is, that there is one fundamental difficulty which they cannot fairly meet, or fully explain, and therefore make vain attempts to explain away. It is easy enough to eulogize the strong and glorious faith of the patriarch, who would rather slay his son than doubt or disobey his God; easy enough to depict in touching strains the filial piety and unsuspecting prattling of the little victim, as he ran by his father's side; easy to stand and receive in reverential silence the full impression of the heart-rending question, "Father, where is the lamb?" and the answer from that bursting heart, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb." But with all this, the difficulty still remains: how could God make such a demand, or for three long days test even Abraham's faith by so severe a strain?

Before attempting, however, to say how He *could*, it would be well to ask carefully, whether we can be sure that He really *did*—whether it is so undoubted a fact as is generally assumed, that a distinct and positive command was received from God by Abraham, to slay and burn his son. If half the ingenuity that has been displayed in attempts to account for the command, and reconcile it with God's declared abhorrence of human sacrifices, had been spent upon a careful examination of the command itself, the difficulty would, in all probability, not have arisen at all. We have not space to enter upon any full discussion of the various solutions of the supposed difficulty that have been suggested at different times. One writer imagines the whole affair to have been a simple vision, having no more outward reality than the aerial journeys of Ezekiel. Another looks upon the account given with such elaborate attention to detail, as the interpretation of some hieroglyphic that fell into the writer's hands. A third, accepting the whole as literal and real, vindicates and explains it on the simple ground that Abraham was well acquainted with the Phœnician custom of

* Josephus says he was twenty-five years old; on what authority we do not know.

sacrificing children to idols. Rosenmüller sees in it a close resemblance to the story of Iphigenia, and other legends of a similar kind. Canon Stanley, in his lectures on the Jewish Church, endeavours to remove the greatest difficulty by ascribing the temptation to Satan rather than to God. "That this temptation or trial," he says, "through whatever means it was suggested, should in the sacred narrative be ascribed to the over-ruling voice of God, is in exact accordance with the general tenor of the Hebrew Scriptures. A still more striking instance is contained in the history of David, where the same temptation which in one book is ascribed to God is in another ascribed to Satan."

But one of the most obvious proofs of the difficulty connected with the common interpretation is to be found in the fact, that Dr. Arnold can offer no better solution than the following: 'God,' he says, 'commanded Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac, and Abraham's ready obedience is one of the most striking instances on record of self-devoting faith. A writer in the *Morning Watch*, while combating the view taken of the Old Testament by a writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, speaks of this as God's approbation of an act of infanticide. He chooses, I suppose, to use the offensive term *infanticide*, in order to express his belief that virtue and obedience are synonymous terms, and that what God commands, be it what it may, becomes instantly our duty to perform. A far more cautious and wiser writer, and one never to be named without respect—Bishop Butler—has made a wide distinction between principles and habits, and individual actions. 'God,' he says, 'could not command us to cultivate habits of deceit and cruelty; but he may command us to take away life in particular cases, because that is not in itself necessarily wrong.' This is perfectly true; but though all taking away life is not wrong, yet can it be otherwise than wrong, according to an enlightened view of our duty, for a father to take away the life of his innocent son, and to imagine himself, by such an act, offering an acceptable sacrifice to God? And the question is, whether our notions of God himself are not rather derived from those notions of goodness which he has implanted in us, than our notions of goodness derived from our idea of God; whether, therefore, it is not a contradiction to imagine God, as commanding an act which, to our best reason, appears evil; and whether, in our ignorance of the unseen world, any vision, dream or revelation whatsoever, so commanding us to evil, can bear with it an external attestation of its coming from God, sufficient to counterbalance the internal evidence that it does not come from him; whether, in short, a sane mind is not bound to consider such a suggestion or command as coming from an evil

spirit, and permitted by God for the trial of his faith, rather than as the real will of God for the guidance of his conduct. I confess, that if we suppose the external and internal evidence with respect to any message professing to come from God to be thus opposed to one another, I see not how the human mind can escape from the agony of such a conflict but through insanity." (Sermons, vol. 2, p. 394-6.)

We can fully endorse Dr. Arnold's statement of the case, and all the difficulties that accompany it. He puts the whole question in its true light; and his words are by no means too strong. But when he proceeds to explain how it was that Abraham himself "escaped from the agony of such a conflict," in any other way than "through insanity," he leaves the thick darkness as thick as ever, and rather increases than diminishes our perplexity. "Now apply," he says, "to the case of Abraham, the principle which has been developed above; and not only does every difficulty vanish, but the story remains fraught with instructions for God's people in every age, let their advancement in moral knowledge be what it will. Human sacrifices, and particularly the sacrifice of children by their parents, were notoriously practised by the nations of Canaan. By the Moabites they were considered as the greatest possible mark of devotion, and performed therefore in circumstances of extraordinary peril as the means of obtaining deliverance when every less precious offering was unavailing. So, many years before God had declared his abhorrence of such sacrifices in a time and country where they were practised as the most solemn rite of religion, and with the natural feeling so strongly prompting us to think that God will be propitiated by that which it costs us most to offer, what reason is there for thinking that the command to sacrifice his son Isaac was received in any other light than as a command to a most painful duty, severely trying indeed to his feelings, but in no way startling to his conscience? . . . I know there are some persons who cannot bear to suppose that Abraham was less aware than we are of the wickedness of human sacrifices in general, because they believe that he was in all points of duty no less enlightened than the most enlightened Christian. Do they think, then, that polygamy is a matter of indifference; or do they imagine that Abraham, judging of it as Christians do, yet lived habitually in known sin?" Now all this leaves the real difficulty untouched. The question is not, whether Abraham could receive such a command without anything like the shock to his moral sense which it would give to ours, but, whether God could, consistently with His own nature, command His servant to perform an act which He uniformly condemned as the crying evil of idolatry, and the grossest violation of His own revealed will

and law. If God had commanded Abraham to live in polygamy, or rather adultery, the cases might have been parallel; but no act that Abraham performed without a command from God will help to remove the difficulties occasioned by commands that were really given. Moreover, it may be perfectly true that the moral sense of Abraham was no more shocked by the command to slay his son, than it would have been by the command to take a dozen wives. But the commandments of God are not made to accord with the defective notions of men, and He cannot command evil because certain men may think it good. If the slaughter of Isaac was a right thing, we need not see any difficulty in the fact that God commanded it; but if in itself it was wrong, we may well pause and look carefully at the command, that we may not hurry too rapidly to the conclusion that God ever commanded a wrong thing.

The difficulty, which is a very grave one, is not removed by the fact that God afterwards prevented the command from being executed, and thereby proved that from the very beginning He did not intend it to be carried out. It may be shifted, but it is not solved. The command is not affected by anything that took place after it had been given; and Abraham's part was really performed as soon as he set out from home with the knife, the fire, and the wood.

The question to be decided is, whether God can truly be said to have commanded Abraham, even at the very first, to slay and burn his son? In other words, was the ultimate issue of the whole affair, the sudden arrest of the patriarch's arm, and the order to spare his son, a *repeal* of the first command, or an *explanation* of the whole? The traditional view makes it a repeal; we are prepared to maintain that it was an exposition. We admit most fully that Abraham understood the words of God as a distinct command to slay his only son. And we can stand in devout admiration, as the patriarch sets out with anxious heart, but with resolute will and firm faith, provided with knife, and wood, and fire, and prepared to use them if they are verily needed: "accounting that God was able to raise Isaac up even from the dead." It may be that Abraham could not understand the command in any other way; just as the Jews could hardly think of the Saviour's body, when he said, "destroy this temple, and I will raise it up again in three days," and his own disciples so often misunderstood what now appear the simplest words. But that does not really affect the question whether this is really the true and only meaning of the words—that is to say, whether such a command ever really issued from the mouth of God.

The point to be decided is simply the accuracy of the word

burnt-offering, as expressing the sense of the original ; and this turns to a great extent upon the propriety of taking what was no doubt a technical term under the Mosaic economy, and determining the meaning of the passage under consideration by the technical sense which it acquired after the lapse of four or five hundred years. This is only the second time that the words translated "offer him up for a burnt-offering" occur ; and we do not meet with them again till the giving of the law, five centuries afterwards, after which time this is the standing phrase used to denote the particular kind of sacrifice called a *burnt-offering*. But in the words themselves there is not the slightest allusion to burning. And burning is not confined to this particular sacrifice. Every sacrifice was burned, either in whole or in part ; and the only difference was that this was given up entirely to God, as too holy to be applied to any common use, or even to be eaten by the priests. The plain and literal meaning is "make it (him) ascend for an ascending," and since it was through the fire that a sacrifice was made to ascend to God, the Septuagint translators introduced the notion of burning into their rendering of the word,* and called the "ascending-offering" a "burnt-offering." But notwithstanding their translation, it is a doubtful and disputed question, whether the "ascending" had reference to the placing of the victim *upon* the altar to be consumed, or to its ascending *from* the altar in smoke and flame. The verb translated "offer up" does not help us to any conclusion. It is simply the causative conjugation (*hiphil*) of the verb to ascend : and signifies either take him up, bring him up, or send him up. The very same word is used in Gen. xxxvii. 28, where they "lifted up" Joseph out of the pit ; in Num. xx. 25, where Moses is commanded to "bring up" Aaron and his son to Mount Hor ; and in 2 Kings ii. 1, where the Lord is about to "take up" Elijah to heaven. Consequently, so far as the verb is concerned, it is left quite indefinite what was to be done with Isaac when the mountain was reached. And in strict literality the words mean nothing more than "take him up, bring him up, or make him ascend for an *olah* (an ascending, a going up, *sc.* to God) upon one of the mountains."

There is no necessity, however, to drop the meaning "offer him up." It is quite enough to have shown that there is nothing in the verb about fire and wood (*i. e.*, about slaying and burning) either expressed or implied. The fact that Abraham took the fire, and knife, and wood, only shows that he understood it so, simply because the only mode of offering or giving up to God

* This was not always the case. In fact they call the sacrifice of Isaac a *holocaustis*.

that he had ever heard of, was by slaying and consuming the sacrifice. God reserved the explanation till the mountain was reached; and Abraham acted up to the light he had. But does not the noun determine the meaning of the verb? Certainly not. The noun is derived from the verb, not the verb from the noun. It means nothing more than that which goes up (*sc.* to God), an ascending thing, an offering to God. Rams, bulls, and goats could only go up to God in fire; to be sent up or given up to Him, they must be burned. But this never applied to men. Their dedication to God was always effected in a different manner from this; yet Abraham had never heard of any other way. This was a lesson he had yet to learn; so that when God commanded him to give Isaac up, to bring him up, or offer him up, for an *olah* upon one of the mountains, he naturally thought of this as the way intended, and did what God had not commanded, viz., provided the knife, the wood, and the fire. But his interpretation of the command was not the right one; that he received, and was intended to receive, when the mountain had been climbed. God honoured the faith which obeyed so promptly, even though a premature and mistaken interpretation led him to do more than was commanded. The error was speedily corrected; whilst the very excess of zeal only showed how heartily and trustfully the command was obeyed.

There is nothing forced or strained in this explanation; nor is there anything in the words which it suppresses and ignores. On the other hand, it is free from all the objections to which the common interpretation is exposed, and brings out far more distinctly the great purpose of God. The command of God, as commonly understood, is so entirely opposed to His nature and will, as plainly and universally revealed, that whilst one writer admits that such a command, if given now, would drive to insanity, another regards it as an open question whether it emanated from Satan or from God. As we interpret it, God does not even appear to deny Himself. According to the common opinion, God *repealed* His command, when He saw how ready the patriarch was to obey, and Isaac was not offered up at all. According to our view, God only *explained* it; and Isaac was really given up or devoted to God, not to die, but to live a life of faith, obedience, and complete consecration. The ram was given up in one way, namely, by death or fire, as the symbol; not that Isaac was not given up to God at all, but that he was given up in another and the only true way, viz., as a living sacrifice.

And this brings out the true intention of the whole. All the great purposes of God, whether in the trial of Abraham, the training of Israel, or the gift of His Son, were to culminate in this—to train mankind to present living sacrifices and not dead

ones. And although the process of training was to stretch over a thousand years, it was in perfect harmony with His general treatment of Abraham, His friend, that he should give him one glimpse and illustration of this great fact in the somewhat startling demand for his own son.

We need hardly say how much there is in such a view, if grammatically admissible, to commend it to our thoughtful consideration and acceptance; how thoroughly it indicates the consistency of God, and removes all that could shock our most tender feelings. We may no doubt be told that we are anticipating by a thousand years the revelations of the Gospel, and forgetting altogether the intervening shadows of the law. But are we not warranted in doing so? Were there not promises and revelations made to Abraham, which the law obscured but could not annul? This may have been the very time when Abraham saw the day of Christ and was glad. The New Testament idea of "living sacrifices," like so much else which was veiled and hidden by the law, was here brought out for a moment like an early streak of sunlight upon the horizon, over which there afterwards gathers a dark veil of clouds. Let us adopt this explanation, and whilst the patriarch's faith stands out with all the unequalled prominence attributed to it in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the character of God is vindicated from the slightest appearance of sanctioning and commanding, even in words and as a trial of faith, an inhuman and ungodly deed; and we are saved from the necessity of either inventing sophistical apologies for what we instinctively shrink from and cannot comprehend, or else attributing to Satan what the Bible distinctly affirms to have been done by God.

J. M.

Nottingham.

SHORT NOTES ON LONG QUESTIONS.

NO. I.—A HINT FROM LORD BACON.

A PASSAGE in Lord Bacon's "Essay on Truth" has often afforded me a good deal of amusement. He says, speaking of a certain class of people: "There be that delight in giddinesse; and count it a bondage to fix a beleefe; affecting Freewill in Thinking as well as in Acting." I do not know that we do very often, in these days, meet with people of this sort, an affectation, at least, of rationality having become the fashion; but the idea of them seems to haunt my fancy, and in imagination I have often made their acquaintance. Surely it would be a pleasant refreshment, after a hard day's work amidst realities, to pass an hour with a friend

who thought just as he chose, and verily asserted as his sincere belief whatever pleased him best. It would be as good as a trip to fairy land: and indeed, in fairy land (where we must be excused for transporting the reader in such haste) we might imagine ourselves confronting a being who not only assumed, but really did possess freewill in thinking. I think it is worth our while to try and conceive him—a person with all the outward form and figure of a man, called upon to fulfil life's duties, yet with a notion that two and two might make five when convenient, and that if it suited him best, to-morrow would obligingly come before to-day. Let us conceive the man, moreover, proud of this power of thinking as he liked, and supposing it the true intellectual prerogative of manhood; drawing advantageous contrasts between himself, whose thoughts were free, and the poor creatures who could think only in one way. Imagine him feeling himself to be not wanting, but in possession of a power. That would really be free will in thinking. And it would be, as we see, simply the absence of the rational nature of man; it would be a seeming power coming into existence by a want. The true faculty of thought is based upon necessity, it has no freedom but in the inevitable fulfilment of law, choice is its death. Our man, endowed with a free will in thinking and proud of it, is precisely, so far as reason is concerned, an idiot.

It is worth our while, I say, to imagine this picture, because perhaps there is another which may be put by the side of it: and that picture is ourselves. This I affirm: that man, in his seeming prerogative of free will in acting, is the spiritual idiot of the universe, and that the power of acting rightly or wrongly, *as we choose*, is no other thing than the want of the true spiritual nature. It is the nature of action, as of thought, to be necessary; nor has it, nor can it have, other freedom than in a fulfilment of law, inevitable and without possibility of deviation.

Our freewill is simply the expression of a want in man. We are proud of our arbitrary power of doing, as an idiot might be proud of his arbitrary power of believing.

Two objections, however, immediately appear to rise against this view: one, that as a matter of fact, our freewill or power of moral choice is the distinction which raises us above the things around us. We are superior to *things*, if not exclusively, at least pre-eminently, in being called upon to take our stand for right or wrong: and if we were not, we were no longer men. The second objection is like unto the first, and is, that to conceive our action made necessary is to conceive it reduced to passiveness, and make our deeds truly our ACTS no more.

To these two objections the answer is one. Our action, although arbitrary, does elevate us above things which have no relation,

not even a defective one, to action : as even an arbitrary power of thinking would elevate its possessor above things which have no relation whatever to thought. An idiot, though in the full sense he cannot be called a man, is, at least, more than a stone. We may say of him that he ought to be a man.

And-so we may say of ourselves.

We are legitimately proud of our arbitrary action because the true action is not presented to us wherewith to compare our own ; so might an arbitrary thinker be legitimately proud if the range of his experience presented to him no thinkers in the true sense of the word. Nor, doubtless, can our false pride cease even to be legitimate, so long as our sensuous apprehensions bound the scope of our thoughts. But it is seen in its true light when we suffer them to rise where our own best experience and our religious faith unite to call them. Of action that is necessary, and yet not passive, that is most perfect because necessary, we do know. We ascribe it to God ; it is His great prerogative with whom "it is impossible to lie." It may baffle conception, but it is not hard to faith ; even to the heart it is easy also, for in our own experience we almost know it too. In our best moments, when God's loving kindness shines on us most brightly, does He not seem almost to share his own privilege with us, and show us how necessity and action are at one in Him ? He makes them one in us, banishing choice, making choice hateful to us, by a compulsion which is not bondage, a necessity we recognize as freedom.

The standard that we take determines our feeling here ; and for the standard of humanity we look in vain if we do not look to God.

Necessity and action, then, truly are one and not opposed ; the type of action is God's action. The want that is in us making our action arbitrary, and the limitation of our sensible experience which presents to our eyes no action of the perfect type, have imposed on us the contrary thought, from which, surely, sincerely to reflect is to be free.

One or two thoughts may be added. The argument rests on the basis of a want in our own nature : it is enough to say, surely, that this is a known fact ; we make no assumption to meet the exigencies of the case. If human life has any significance, if the human heart and conscience are not dreams, it is a "true cause" that we assign. We have said, too, that the seeming possession of a power comes by an absence : to this also manifold experience testifies ; not to refer to more instances than one, how much false feeling of greatness comes by mere absence of humility.

And finally, what would come of the possession of an arbitrary

power of thinking? What but just that which does come from arbitrary power of acting?—failure, loss, grievous error, distress, ruin. And what remedy, but in learning to think as thought would be if its necessity were not wanting; and then, if it so might be, the restoration of the intellectual life?—*our* remedies, through God's goodness: first, learning to act as if necessity were, where alas! it is not, and in the end the raising up—how can we say it, but—to Life? * * *

THE PRESENT AND FUTURE STATE OF THE HEATHEN.

[THE following Paper is an extract from a letter written, some years since, by a gentleman engaged on public works in India, to some friends in England, who could not be persuaded but that, being among heathens, it was his duty to assemble and preach to them, whatever his personal unfitness for the task. As presenting a picture of the relations of the heathen to Christianity, and of their actual condition, and how it strikes a stranger, and more especially as touching a question sometimes of late referred to in our pages, it has been laid before us for publication. The readers of the CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR, however, will please to remember, that it was not written *for them*, or for any persons holding the broader and happier views of the "glorious gospel," which they, for the most part, we doubt not, gratefully entertain; but for friends holding, ignorantly and unthinkingly it may be, views which, when distinctly and logically enunciated, are very much like those attributed in the letter to Mr. A.]

We are devoutly thankful that there are so many thoughtful and faithful preachers of Christ and Him crucified, whose preaching is not fairly open to the charge of involving the notions here attributed. But we have only to think of those good men in city, town, and village, whose undisciplined zeal indulges in the most appalling pictures of the eternal state, as well as in the most crude representations of salvation and its method, to convince ourselves that, while many Christians enjoy the valuable ministrations of men of thoughtful and tender piety, multitudes are still surrounded by only such types of so-called Christian doctrine as inevitably arouse revolt in hearts and consciences that have not submitted to some indurating process. And, further, we have only to call to mind the statements about the heathen that, till within these few years, were unhesitatingly put forth from pulpit and platform—with the

view of stimulating to more earnest prayer, and a more liberal support of our various missionary societies—in order to convince ourselves that just such sentiments as those expressed by the writer were the very natural results. If, to-day, some of the phrases and turns of thought he employs strike us as altogether strange and surely having no basis, this very sense of strangeness may mark the degree of happy divergence from the notions not long since current and unquestioned. We believe that crude and rash representations of the teaching of the New Testament have done, and are doing, far more mischief than good, easy-going people dream of. The statistics of success at this or that centre of earnest but rash and reckless, though well-meant effort, may be matter for devout thankfulness; but the statistics of terrible harm done to those who are repelled, who can collect?

There are some things in the following letter very easily replied to, no doubt; but, on the whole, as showing the effect produced on at least an average mind and conscience by the kind of doctrinal Christianity to which alone the writer seems, while in England, to have been subjected, we have judged it right not to refuse insertion. But it has recalled to mind a hitherto unpublished letter of the late honoured and beloved Dr. Pye Smith, now lying before us, which, we think we may advantageously append; and which, whatever our readers may think of the immediately following, we are sure they will appreciate and sympathize with.—ED.]

“ . . . If, however, I had only meant to justify myself, I should not have written this letter. Mr. A.’s note has induced me to set down thoughts that have been long in my mind, but which I have not written, because I know that they will not be acceptable to many at home.

“What you and Mr. A. have written is founded on the belief which is usual at home: it is quite “orthodox,” that all the heathen are in a state of perdition; that each one of them who dies without having had the Gospel preached to him, and accepting it, and believing in Christ, is lost beyond recall, and will suffer the pains of hell for ever. “Of course,” you say, “the Bible says so,” and you quote texts which I know very well; and I am not going at present to discuss whether the Bible says so, though there are some texts that look the other way. All I have to show you is what, in consequence of facts which cannot be denied, you are binding yourself to believe of that God whose name is Love.

“It is not so difficult, without lack of charity, to hold the above belief at home. There religious people are usually so surrounded with those whom they either know or hope to be the same, that

they are able almost to overlook those without. Suppose you cast your eyes round the neighbourhood in which you live, you say to yourself, 'Mr. and Mrs. A., Mr. and Mrs. B., Miss C., Mr. D., Mr. E.—Oh, these are the excellent of the earth, no question of their state. The F.s, the G.s, the H.s, the K.s, if they are not equal to the first, are still very good people, church members too, and if rather more worldly than could be desired, still there is no doubt but they are Christians. The L.s, the M.s, the N.s—well, it is much to be regretted that they have never made a public profession of religion, but they are regular attendants, liberal in donations, unimpeachable in character; we are bound to hope that the root of the matter is in them. As for the O.s, the P.s, the Q.s, the R.s, we know less of them; they go to church, too, and not to chapel, but they are well spoken of. It is no business of ours to condemn them because they have been brought up in laxer notions than ours; we hope they have repented according to their lights. As for T. and U., and V., W., X., we fear they go to no place of worship at all—their state is dangerous. Still, they have been well taught in their youth in the Sunday school and elsewhere. We will pray that the good seed which has been sown may yet spring up and bear fruit. And it is only Y., who is seldom seen sober, and Z., whose language is such that we cannot go through the street in which he lives, of whom we must conclude that they are reprobates. And if they fall, their condemnation is just; they have sinned against light, the clergyman has spoken to them, the minister has exhorted, the Scripture-reader has been driven from their door—whom have they to thank but themselves if they are lost? And who knows but that even at the eleventh hour God's grace may touch their hearts.'

"Thus you go round the neighbourhood and find hope for almost all. And for the heathen without, you think much of the missionaries and what they are doing, and little of the numbers of the heathen; besides, you do not see them, you do not know them; you have more actual living sympathy with the cat that lies on your hearth than with an unknown heathen man in an unknown country. It is always so; what is not seen affects us little. Since I left England there have been two great earthquakes—one in America, in which a town of 40,000 inhabitants was swallowed up; one in Italy, in which 20,000 people are said to have perished. I may safely say, that if one house in M—were to fall down before your eyes and crush one family, you would feel more emotion than the mere tidings of the above awful calamities could produce. But is it so in the eyes of God? You do not realize the number or the condition of the heathen. Let me help you to do so.

"When you land in a country like India, and live not in the cities, where Englishmen abound, but in the interior, where natives swarm around you, and you are alone in a crowd, and when you consider what a speck of that country, after all, you see, you begin to realize what heathendom is. At the same time, you find the heathen are men of like passions with yourself, you are soon bound to them by the tie of mutual services, and you begin to sympathize with them. I rise in the morning—a heathen arranges my bed, another sweeps my room, another cooks my breakfast, another brings it to table and waits on me. A heathen runs on my messages, heathens have guarded my house at night. I go forth—a heathen saddles my horse, a heathen holds an umbrella over my head to protect me from the sun. I go on the works, hundreds are around me—all heathens. The overseer brings the daily report—how many workpeople to-day? Four thousand! Four thousand looking to me for their daily bread, all of whom call me "father"—all heathens! I cannot speak to them—to some, not at all; a few disjointed phrases are all that I can address on any subject to those who are cleverest at guessing my meaning. Still they understand a kind look, a kind tone, and are grateful for them. Each of this four thousand is a father, a mother, a daughter, a son, intent on fulfilling his part in the world as he understands it: earning bread for himself and those dependent on him. Sinful, no doubt, worse than most at home—lying freely, ready to cheat, foul-mouthed when angry, with other sins; but so their fathers taught them, as they themselves had learned, both by precept and example. And the virtues they have learned from their fathers they practise as well as the vices. Conscience! yes, they have conscience no doubt; but what is conscience when oppressed and overborne from childhood by daily example and positive precept of those whom, remember, God himself selected as the earthly guardians of the new-born soul—opposed to the direct temptations of a sinful nature and of Satan himself—unfortified from youth to age by a single godly exhortation, a single warning of the awful consequences of slighting its voice? And if you say, 'These might be warned—what of the myriads that never see a Christian? what of the generations that have gone before? And all this is as one little spot, that this dot would cover, on the map of India, and India is but one country of hundreds. Cholera comes among my work-people—fifty are dead to-day, fifty the next. Where are they? 'Gone to hell,' says Mr. A., 'burning in the lake of fire and brimstone for ever and ever. God had patience with them no longer, and justly swept them away. They have met their deserts.' Easy

words, Mr. A., but awful thoughts. Hold your finger in the candle and repeat them if you can.

"Let me take you to another scene: Come, with Mr. A., to a native village in the interior, where a European never was. It is evening—the sun that has all day coursed over-head in a cloudless sky is sinking in a golden haze. From all sides you see approaching across the boundless plain the men of the village, driving their plough-cattle towards the clump of ancient trees that shelters the shapeless huts that they call home. All day they have toiled beneath the burning sun that the Englishman dares not face, and all their reward is a handful of rice and a draught of muddy water—happy if sure even of that. In the village, as the sun goes down, a thin smoke curls up from every roof, the wives are preparing the evening meal, the young women are carry the waterpots to the village tank, the boys drive homeward the village cows that have been grazing on the fallows through the day. Children are playing on the ground, as poor English children play, with stones, and shells, and dirt, but do not, like them, quarrel and fight; are well behaved, and obedient to their parents. Those parents have no idea but of bringing up their children like themselves; as the fathers work, so will the children—as the fathers think, so will they—as the fathers sin or do well, so will they sin or do well. This for hundreds of years has been their round of life; no notion have they of change but for the worse; no great man approaches them save as an oppressor. They only ask to be allowed to live; willingly they resign half the fruits of their toil to the tax-gatherer—why, they do not know, for government does nothing, that they can comprehend, for them; but their fathers gave it, and so do they. Let them but have their rice—or for many, coarser food even than that—and if times are good, an occasional feast of a little curds and sweetmeats and butter, and they ask nothing more.

"And what is the future of these people after twenty, forty, sixty years of a life of which an Englishman would say, 'It were better not to have lived?' What is the future of those children? What is the future of yon babe on its mother's breast—which God, a week since, sent into this village, and entrusted to that proud, fond, but ignorant mother, who loves it with a mother's love, but can teach it only as she was taught? Ask Mr. A. He says—if he speaks out his creed logically—'That babe, and those children, and all the people of this village, are doomed, as their fathers before them, to hopeless perdition. They did not ask to be born—they did not choose their place in the world; small is their pleasure in this life, and eternal misery their portion in the next. That babe will grow up to be a man; he will do as his father before him; what his father teaches to

be his duty he will do, but also he will learn to use lies and cheating as a defence against oppression, to utter bad language, to worship idols. True, God entrusted him to such parents, and disposed his mind to believe that all they did was right. God placed him in this village, and permitted his nature to be disposed to all evil and averse to all good. He will be tempted by Satan, but never taught to fear sin. Against all this is but his conscience; and if through all these temptations he wavers but once, and disregards its voice, his fate for eternity is sealed. Faith in Christ might save him, but of Christ he will never hear.'

"So says Mr. A. And such as that infant is at this moment were all the inhabitants of that village before him, and such their fathers before them for thousands of years. And there are half a million such villages in India, and India is but one country of heathendom. Every thirty years, six hundred millions of heathens are born and pass away, and have no chance, save the very few who may possibly hear a missionary, and the happy infants only born to die. Thus it has been for thousands of years; and God, whose name is Love, continues to create every year millions of immortal beings inevitably doomed, says Mr. A., with no hope of escape save an early death, to a short life of trouble and an endless life of misery. Christ died for them, but Satan is allowed to get them. And all for what? Why could not these doomed beings have been allowed to rest uncreated? No answer to this has Mr. A., only he speaks of the 'power of the potter over the clay,' of the 'greater happiness of the redeemed when they see the misery they have escaped,' though their own dearest relations share that misery—of God's 'sovereign power' and of His 'glory'—as if there were glory in creating beings whom He cannot or will not make happy. This is to make Him worse than Juggernaut, who for his own 'glory' crushes the bodies of his worshippers, but at least promises them eternal life. Even a man will put a wounded animal out of its misery, but God, says Mr. A., creates millions *for* misery—to His own sorrow, and for the pleasure of none but Satan.

"What, then, you ask me, is my solution? I have none but this: 'Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?' Whatever may be said of the English heathen, who have all their life been within sight of Christian example and within sound of Christian teaching, I cannot think that those whose condition and circumstances I have attempted to describe are to be judged by any such severe rule as that usually applied, which dooms them to hell if, in spite of wicked nature, evil parents themselves untaught, Satan's temptations, and total want of better teaching,

they have ever disobeyed their conscience—and who has not? Say not they shall be beaten with *few* stripes; if their misery is everlasting, the stripes cannot be few. One stripe in a century, *for ever*, were uncouth millions of stripes.

“While I am convinced that God wills the whole earth to be Christianised, and that this shall be through the preaching of His word, I cannot, since I have seen what the heathen world is, believe that the salvation of each individual man depends on the Gospel being preached to him and his accepting it. The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. But God is in no hurry. Two thousand years before Christ heathens were living and dying, and the chosen people were not even commanded to spread the knowledge of the true God. Centuries after Christ, and even the existence of half the world was not known to the Christian part of it. Eighteen centuries had passed before the missionary spirit was poured out on the churches. And when missionaries are sent, how sparingly is the Holy Spirit bestowed! Not one in ten thousand that hears their voice receives the message. Is Satan, then, more powerful than God? Since the Spirit’s power must be exerted in each individual instance, why is He not ever ready to do it? If a benevolent man found that he could make a physician’s drugs always and immediately efficacious by pronouncing a blessing over the patient, would he not devote his life to doing so? What has Mr. A. to say, save that the faith of Christians is weak, and that the withholding of the Spirit tends to increase it? Very good—for us; but must millions of heathens perish for ever that the faith of a few thousand Christians may be increased? and that God may do for some future generation of heathens, in answer to *fervent* prayers, what was asked for this generation by earnest though weak faith? God is in no hurry! What greater obstacle is there, as far as we can see, to the spread of the Gospel than the confusion of tongues? And why was this caused? To rebuke the pride of the builders of Babel. Do, then, the heathen of this day perish by millions because those early Assyrians were proud?

“No; God will judge the world otherwise than by the rules theologians lay down for him, and more justly; and while all wilful, unrepented sin shall be punished according to the light against which it was committed, not a drop of Christ’s blood shall have been spilt in vain. Therefore it is, that while I believe my work to be a true missionary work if pursued in a right spirit, while I am careful of my words and actions as I never was before, lest any of those around me should plead the example of me, a Christian, for any of their sins at the last day; while I strive that they should see what I cannot tell

them, that I have higher motives than my own will and pleasure, I yet am afraid rashly and beyond my powers to preach to those around me, lest I should but increase their light and their condemnation.

"I know that what I have written will not give pleasure; and yet there is nothing in it save what, could it be believed, should delight every Christian heart. But whether it please or no, I cannot help it; while I have observed and mused the fire burned, and I have spoken."

Letter from the Rev. J. PYE SMITH, D.D.

Manchester, August 31, 1842.

MY DEAR SIR,

It was not in my power to reply to your very kind letter before leaving home for purposes of family obligation, and the intercourse of the Christian love, which local distance does not extinguish. I trust that I can enter feelingly into the consideration of the class of difficulties to which you advert. It is the associate of the unfathomable question of the Origin of Evil, and both seem to be the appointed test for the trial of reflecting persons. We have all the evidence that is suited to our state of discipline that "God is LIGHT, and in him no darkness at all." Then are we willing to act upon this admission? Are we disposed, yea resolved, to rely upon it as a practical principle? Is it not sufficient for reflexion and devotion? Firmly grasping this, is it not the best state for sinful creatures whose hope is in grace, and the frame of mind involving the purest happiness,—to cast ourselves implicitly at the footstool of HIM whom we adore, our A and Ω, committing all to him, and rejoicing in the unalterable truth,—*"He reigneth"*? With this basis for our repose, I have been led to the frequent consideration of the first fact.

[Sept. 2. I fear that I had something in mind when I wrote this on Wednesday, and which has now escaped me.]

No inspired speaker or writer is so awfully copious and positive as to the hopeless state of those who *"die in their sins,"* as the *most meek, and gentle, and kind-hearted* of men, the man of Nazareth.

Yet I cannot venture to reject the conclusion which you state, with powerful and impressive simplicity, from such passages as speak of the *loss* of the soul (τῆς ψυχῆς)—*destruction, —second death, &c.*

Neither am I able to submit a negative to your other deep and interesting query: Can the soul (spirit, mind, or whatever

it may be called), subsist without the divine conservation?—I know of no retreat from the negative of that, *unless* it were to arise from a correlative in the spiritual world to the position that, in the natural system, the Creator gave existence to organic beings, so that each individual contained within itself germs of an *endless* development.

Dr. Watts somewhere says something like this: that, if eternity should bring to light some wondrous plan by which the Deity will extirpate all evil, *every benevolent creature would rejoice*. IF infinite benevolence would rejoice in such a result, *surely it MUST* take place!

I have reason to think that many of the soundest and most pious divines in Protestant Germany believe that, in the separate state, the gospel will be offered as the way of salvation, to the vast multitudes who have never rejected it, because they never knew it.

Pardon embarrassing haste. I am *deeply* obliged by your letter. Grace and peace be multiplied to you, my dear brother!

I am,

Affectionately yours,

J. PYE SMITH.

"Lead us, O Lord, and
teach us. Unto whom
shall we go but to THEE?"

The Rev. H. H. Dobney.

GRACE BEFORE MEAT.

HAPPILY there has been of late years a very general revolt against that which is merely outward and formal in religion. In many ways it has been shown that good men are more than ever giving the preference to the spirit over the letter—the life over the form. They refuse, for instance, to be bound any longer to the *bitter* observance of the Sabbath; they have learned that the Lord's-day, with its rest and enjoyment and cheerful worship, is a whole world apart from the Hebrew Sabbath, with its gloomy restraints and oppressive ceremonialisms. They no longer frown on the innocent amusements which give relief and freshness to a life worn and saddened with over-much labour, or hope to save their souls by abusing their bodies. They are beginning to believe that every creature of God is good, if it be thankfully received and wisely used. They are beginning to believe that the wonderful complexities of nerve and humour in the eye were

designed to fit it for the enjoyment of the beauty which God has lavished on His works; that the ear was fitted up with its marvellous apparatus of conducting and reverberating tubes and drums, in order that it might be charmed with the concord of sweet sounds; that certain cachinatory muscles would not have been inserted into cheek and throat if it were wrong to laugh, nor the whole body instinctively bend and sway to the influence of music if it were a sin to dance.

These are some of the signs of that recent happy revolt against formality and conventionalism in which we do and will rejoice. None the less, we must remember, that through our folly and weakness, every good movement is in danger of being pushed to an extreme; and that if the movement be of the nature of a revolt, this danger is very greatly enhanced. Those who conduct a political revolution are hardly ever content with securing the ends which, at their start, they had in view; they are carried far beyond these, and too often land in a democratic tyranny or democratic licence even more hateful than the despotism against which they rebelled. And in like manner those who have rebelled against the rigid yoke of formalism are in great danger of running into the opposite extreme of licence; in great danger either of neglecting forms altogether or of imposing their freedom as a yoke on consciences which are as yet too weak to bear it.

Now we have none of us, formalist or freeman, a right to make ourselves the standard to which all our brethren are to conform! nor is it wise of us to forget that religious forms and habits are necessary to us, at least, so long as we are in the body. The life is more than any one of its organs; but how shall it reveal and culture itself except through the organs which bring it into relation with the world? The spirit is more than the letter, and it is well that we should give it the preference; but how shall the spirit express itself, save through the letter? It is well to hallow all our days to the Lord; but will it help us to do that if we neglect the rest and worship of the Lord's day? It is well that we should always be dead to sin and alive to holiness; but it will not help us to reach that good end to undervalue the ordinance that symbolizes it. It is well that every table at which we sit should be holy, and every meal become a sacrament; but to partake of the Lord's Supper is the way to hallow all we do. And in like manner it is well, that "in everything we should give thanks." But we shall not be aided to this perpetual gratitude by omitting to give thanks at set and customary times.

Yet there are many, especially among the advocates of freedom in religion, who have given up the good old custom of saying "grace before meat," and many more who retain it

somewhat doubtfully, and half suspect that it would be wise to give it up. It has often happened to me to hear some such arguments as these. We make too much of eating and drinking. I, for one, am more grateful for a wise book, or when I hear sweet music, or when I fall into pleasant companionship, than when I sit down to dinner. Why should I thank God for my dinner, and not for my company, or my music, or my book? And then, how often the "grace" sounds like a mere farce. Here are a dozen people round a table, full of cheerful mirth and noisy talk. For a minute there is a sudden lull, while the host, or some clerical guest, asks a blessing, or returns thanks, and then the talk and laughter break out again, and they all feel the "grace" as an interruption, or a hypocritical pretence. What can be more incongruous and disrespectful than thus to thrust a religious act into the midst of social gaiety?

These arguments sound plausibly enough, but after all, there is very little in them. The thought of God ought never to be strange or unwelcome to good men; nor would it seem so strange to many of them as it sometimes does, but for the lingering effects of a most injurious prejudice. The fact is, that a good many of us can't quite believe that God is not angry with us every time we laugh, and, therefore, cannot take our mirth into His presence so freely and habitually as we take our sorrows. We indeed should hardly hold it a compliment if our children shut us out of all their play, and only came to us when they wanted us to comfort them, or to help them! yet we treat the good tender Father in Heaven, as we should not like our children to treat us. To many, indeed, the thought of God—and what more horrible insult can they offer to the Gracious Majesty of Heaven! which comes with the grace before or after meat, is like the death's head at the feasts of the Egyptians—it comes only to remind them of their mortality; but should it be thus with those who call God Father? Once let us get right thoughts of Him, as pleased in all our pleasures, as well as afflicted in all our afflictions, and we shall forthwith cease to find anything incongruous, or hypocritical, in an acknowledgment of Him amid our most mirthful enjoyments.

Nor does the other argument carry more weight, the argument which takes form in the question, "Why should I thank God for my dinner, rather than for the book, or the music, or the company which I like even better than my dinner?" Why, indeed? Why not thank him for all? But it will not help you to thank Him for all, to neglect thanking Him for any one. And there are special reasons why you should thank Him for food. For it is surely right, that in a Christian household there should be *some* set times for united acknowledgement of God's

goodness, and meal-time is in most houses. the only time in which all the members of the family are gathered together. What other time is there so suitable and convenient as this, for a common expression of gratitude to the Giver of every good and perfect gift? Your book you may read alone—and the oftener you inwardly thank God for putting a good book into your hand the better! music you may hear alone, or in company with strangers, or when the little-ones are a-bed; your pleasant society—for which as well as for sweet music, it is right that you should give thanks—involves the presence of friends; but at your meals the whole household meets, and for the most part only the household, thus affording the one opportunity for the whole family to unite in praising God.

This, however, is taking the low ground of convenience. We may take the higher ground of Divine example and sanction. There is, indeed, *no law* enjoining grace before or after meat in the Gospel of Christ, any more than there is in the law for keeping holy the first day of the week; but for the one as for the other there is example and inspired sanction. When Jesus gave that great dinner party or supper party on the mountain, at which He fed five thousand men besides women and children, He "*blessed* the bread" before He brake it, probably using the ordinary Hebrew grace, since no special words are reported, and thus veiling under an ordinary form of speech the Divine power by which He multiplied the food.

But Jesus was about to work a miracle, and it may be thought that His example goes no further than this—that when *we* can multiply the food upon the board by blessing it, it will be well of us to use the blessing. We cannot, however, take the same objection to the example of Paul. After that dreadful night on board the ship of Alexandria, when all hope of being saved was lost, Paul recommended the exhausted seaman and passengers to take some meat for their health's sake. "And when he had thus spoken, he took bread *and gave thanks to God in presence of them all*,"—the two hundred and seventy-six companions of his voyage, most of whom were heathens and idolatōrs.

"Ah," but it may be said, "Paul took this opportunity of testifying to the only Wise and True God in the presence of idolatōrs, in order to teach them that there was *one* God, whom all the uproar of the storm could not deafen, and who was able to help after all hope was lost. We trust that in similar conditions, we could hear a similar testimony; but that is no reason why we should say grace every day in our own believing families."

If that is the thought of any of my readers, they are surely somewhat hard to please, yet I think Paul himself will fit you with a sufficient example and reason yet. In 1st Corinthians,

10th Chapter, he is laying down the Christian rule about foods. He maintains that all meats, whether they have been slain in the shambles connected with the Heathen Temples, or in the shambles of the open market, are lawful food, if they be received with thanksgiving. But the man of strong and well informed conscience, who can eat these idol-meats, is not to make himself a law to the weak brother, and compel him to eat of them too. Nor is the weak brother to make himself a law to the strong, and condemn him for eating them. For, argues Paul, "if I with thanksgiving, be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks." The word translated, "I give thanks, is *ευχαριστώ*, from which we get our name for the Lord's Supper. The Eucharist, and Paul's argument is, that food is sanctified by thanksgiving, that even though it has been offered to idols, yet the grateful praise of a pious heart cleanses and hallows it, transforms it from an evil sacrifice into a sacramental food. And the points to be noted here are, that food and thanksgiving are so indissolubly connected in Paul's mind that he uses "*that for which I give thanks*" as a synonym for food: as if it were simply impossible for him to eat without some devout ascription of gratitude; and moreover, that he believes the thanksgiving of a devout heart to have the power of raising the daily bread into an Eucharistical food which shall nourish the soul no less than the body; the bread strengthening the physical nature, the gratitude it excites, and the blessing that gratitude calls down, strengthening the spiritual nature.

These thoughts are expanded in 1 Tim. iv. 3—5. Here Paul speaks of meats as that "which God has created to be received with thanksgiving of them who believe, and know the truth. For everything God has made," he continues, "is good, and nothing to be refused; for it is sanctified by the word of God and by prayer." God, you observe, has created meats for all men, but he has created them to be received "with thanksgiving by them who believe;" for them to receive meats without thanksgiving is for *them* to act as unbelievers, and to violate the purpose of God; and they are thus to receive their food because thanksgiving and prayer "sanctify" to our use whatever good creatures of God may be set before us.

It cannot be denied, therefore, if we accept the teaching of Paul, that to receive our daily food without thanksgiving is to sink to the level of the heathen and the unbeliever; nor can it be denied that Paul assigns a sacramental efficacy to the thanksgiving, a power which sanctifies the daily meal into an Eucharistical feast. In the first passage I quoted implies, that the devout thanksgiving of a pious heart transforms all idolatrous meat into a sacramental food; and in the second passage he

expressly affirms that meat is "*sanctified* by the word of God and by prayer," and that, because it is thus sanctified, we ought to receive it with thanksgiving.

Now what is this peculiar sacramental power which Paul ascribes to prayer and thanksgiving? To this question, suggested by the servant, let the Master reply. The Lord Jesus, in a certain place, affirms, "Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."* Ah! but what does that mean? It means, that every creature—corn, and the beasts given for food among them—was spoken into being by God, that they are His variously embodied words, that they derive all their vital and quickening qualities from the Creative Word which formed them and is imminent in them. "God," says Luther, "does not speak grammatical vocables, but real essential things. Thus, sun and moon, heaven and earth, Peter and Paul, thou and I, are nothing but words of God." Man, therefore, does not live simply by food, but by the will and word of God. *Even in bread man does not live by bread alone.* "The life is more than meat," and more than meat can sustain. Your physical structure and organs may be perfect and in perfect health; science may bend all its wisdom to provide you with suitable and nourishing food; and yet, if God do not bless the food you will die. There is a mystery in life, a secret spring of vital energy which physiologists have not discovered, which physicians cannot replenish. And this mystery is half hidden, half revealed in the words, "Man does not live by bread alone, but by the word of God." *There must be the perpetual secret effluence of the Eternal Creative Word into the invisible springs of life,* if we are not to perish—an effluence which, though commonly given through and with food, may be given apart from food; as we see in the forty days' fasts of Moses, Elijah, and Jesus Christ, each of whom, we are taught, lived on that which proceeded out of the mouth of God.

When, therefore, we ask a blessing, we recognize our dependence on God—we acknowledge not only that our daily bread is from Him, but also that we do not live by bread alone—that only as He blesses the bread can it minister to our nourishment and strength. The meat is "*sanctified*," raised to the power of a sacrament, "*by the Word of God*," and the Word or blessing of God is the heavenly response to our "*prayer and thanksgiving*."

Here, then, are sufficient reasons, whatever the progress of modern thought and freedom may object, for the good and ancient custom of "*grace before meat*"—a custom of which the

* Matthew iv. 4.

breach is almost as frequent as the observance. It is well that in a Christian household, there should be united acts of worship, and as commonly the whole household meets only when they sit down to their meals, this is the most convenient time for such worshipful acts. It is a custom the breach of which, as St. Paul tells us, lands us with unbelievers and those who know not the truth. It is a custom for which the Master himself assigns a philosophical reason which the learned would be the first to admit, viz., that something more than food—even the effluence of the Fount of all Life into the secret wells of our life—is indispensable to our continuance whether in being or in health.

Let me only add that the result of this brief examination into the grounds of a custom so much neglected as that of "saying grace," should lead us to ask whether we are not in some danger of undervaluing other and still more beneficial forms. The tendency of the time is happily against formalism. All the more, therefore, we need to guard against the extreme of neglecting or slighting forms of every kind. This assuredly is our danger, for freedom soon degenerates, unless it be wisely guarded, into insubordination and license. Down with Conventionalism in religion by all means, and down with Hypocrisy to the lowest hell; but retain all useful habits, even though they may have been abused, and the forms and sacraments of worship which conserve and express true piety, even though hypocrisy has discredited them. The Germans have a quaint proverb, which in these times is often in one's thoughts; "*By all means empty the bath down the gutter, but try and save the baby.*" For there is such a general and energetic emptying out of the slops of formalism and cant and hypocritical pretence just now, that one cannot but fear a little lest baby Piety should come to harm, or quietly float down the stream till it be lost to sight.

Let us, therefore, ask ourselves, and that very seriously, Do we nourish by habitual study and devotion that wiser spiritual life which is ever ready to break out into thanksgiving—which does not shrink from loyally obeying Christ in all His ordinances and commandments—which renews its strength by eating the body and drinking the blood of the new Paschal Sacrifice—and which delights to observe all helpful forms and customs of the true spiritual worship?

LENNARD.

OLD AGE.

THE man who mixes much with death and disease often finds himself halting or rather shifting between two opinions. At one time, when he thinks how many gates there are through which death may enter the body, when he remembers that life hangs on many threads, and hangs in such a way that the breaking of one thread is the loosing of all, when he sees how crowded with the weapons of destruction are all things round him, he wonders how it is that a man's life can last through even a day. At another time, when he witnesses to what full health and strength they who have been brought very low are often raised up again, when he sees the flame of life quenched even to a mere smouldering of the embers and yet fanned back again to a bright and steady burning, when he observes men's bodies daily exposed to the innumerable slings and arrows of disease and yet unharmed, he is astonished at the firm grasp with which the body clings to life, and wonders how it is that men ever die at all. The latter mood comes to him often when dwelling on the history of old age. He sees a man far on in years struck down again and again, and yet on each occasion gathering strength for a little longer run. Or he notes men carrying with them vigour and strength far beyond the allotted term of threescore years and ten, while their mates are in their dotage or lying in their graves. He asks himself what is this "old age?" What are the qualities of body and events of life that mould its features and determine its career?

It is a favourite theory with some that there is breathed into every man at his birth a certain sum of life, different for different individuals, that there is given to him as it were a certain amount of vital capital which will last him, allowances being made for accidents, a longer or shorter time, according as he husbands it with care or wastes it like a spendthrift. But against any such view it may be urged with reason—How are we to judge of the extent of a man's vital capital, how are we to know the way in which and the rate at which it is being spent? We cannot take the amount of work done as the measure of life, for he who does the most work is not the shortest-lived; on the contrary, labour, in fit time and place, lengthens rather than otherwise a man's days. Nor can we look upon the amount of resistance offered to disease as a test of the quantity of vitality. If we did so, we should expect to find that every illness with which a man had to battle shortened his life in proportion to the fierceness of the struggle. Such, however, is not the case. From many a sick bed

a man rises whole and renewed in every limb; the past illness may no more cripple his future life than does the labourer's Saturday night's fatigue unfit him for Monday's work. In many a life sickness and disease come and go without leaving a trace behind them, and often those who seemed in their early days so frail that a mere touch might lay them low, are seen to gather strength as they increase in years, and to ripen into a stout old age. In fact, as a general rule, the power of resisting disease, so far from lessening, actually grows with the growing frame; and throughout the whole of life a man's vital condition at any one time is much more dependent on the events of the few preceding days or months than on all that has been undergone during the, it may be, long years before. And if we attempt to seize hold of any other test of vital capacity we shall equally fail. Nowhere shall we find any safe evidence that the allotted span of years is governed by the supposed amount of vital force imparted at birth.

Nevertheless, we shall be forced to admit that length of days is fixed by something more than the mere wear and tear, by something deeper than, and lying beyond, the mere outward circumstances of life; something fixed in, and peculiar to, the organism itself. How else is it that different kinds of animals have lives of a different average length? The histories of a horse, a man, and an elephant, give us no clue to finding out how it is that one lives to twenty, another to seventy, and the third to over a hundred years. Doubtless there are causes for these differences, but they lie at present hid from us, deep in the organisms along with the other mysteries of life. The very best of our knowledge concerning the nature of old age is but a mere scratching of the surface. We cannot as yet hope to taste the meat of science; we can only look through the window, rub the glass, and see what is prepared; perhaps we shall never be able to do any more.

How inward and radical are the elements of decay may also be seen when we consider that the decline of life in man does not in reality begin at somewhat about forty or fifty years, but may be traced back even to infancy itself. If we take the rate of growth as the measure of vital strength, we shall find ourselves forced to admit that life is on the wane even in the earliest periods of existence. Of course it is not denied that the amount of living stuff yearly added to the frame in youth is absolutely far greater than the amount yearly added to the frame in infancy; the bulk and weight of flesh and bone which a growing boy puts on between Midsummer and Christmas could only be rivalled by a company of babies, and a father may lose or gain in a few months the weight of one of his children. But it must be remembered that in the boy and in the man, while

there is more work of growth done, there is also more living stuff already at hand to do the work ; that while the total increase is greater, the amount gathered by each inch or ounce of the body is less than in the child. A few pounds more flesh and blood are nothing to a man, and not much to a boy, but they are enough almost to double the weight of a babe, and their acquirement bespeaks in the latter case a much greater vital activity. If we wish to make growth a true measure of vital power, we must calculate not by the time it takes the body to put on so many pounds, but by the time during which the whole frame doubles or trebles its weight. And in so doing we shall find that, though an animal keeps getting bigger and bigger from birth to adolescence, its power to grow keeps getting less and less, the rate of growth gradually diminishes. It is at the very outset of existence that the work of increase is busiest, that life is strongest ; thenceforward there is in reality nothing but a decline, whose vanishing point is death. What we call old age is only the time at which this failure becomes manifest by reason of its having reached the active functions of the body. If we represent to ourselves the whole process of life as a sort of accumulation by compound interest of a fortune, the expenditure of which we call a work or action, it will not be wholly true to say that youth is a hoarding, manhood a spending, and old age a bankruptcy. We must add that the interest is encroached upon even at the very first, and that this encroachment, though small at the beginning, steadily increases day by day, and thus daily more and more is taken away, not from the actual profit of to-day as compared with that of yesterday, but from what would have been the profit of to-day, had to-day been allowed to gather interest from yesterday's income at the same rate that yesterday gathered from the day before. Somewhere about manhood, the point is reached at which the encroachment puts an end to all further accumulation, and thence onwards there is, instead of a gradually diminishing gain, a gradually increasing loss.

We may also trace the early seeds of decay by studying the history of particular organs, especially of those engaged in building up bodily framework, in transforming meat and drink into flesh and blood. Of all these organs, perhaps the most active and the most important is the liver ; it is, as it were, the centre for the work of nourishing the body. In fact, it would not be unfair to take the relative size of the liver as a rough indication of the actual vital power possessed by an animal at various epochs of its existence. If we do this we cannot fail to be struck by the fact, that while in a full-grown man the weight of the liver is one thirty-sixth of the total weight of body, in an infant it amounts to as much as one-eighteenth ; and there is a

time at which it is actually one half. We have here another indication that even at the very beginning of life the tether is being drawn in, that the movements of the earliest days point to a coming old age.

The exact time, however, at which decay makes itself felt, the greater or less length of days, is determined by the circumstances amid which the animal is placed, by the wear and tear incident to the labours of daily life. In our own bodies we may easily trace out, even in the most superficial organs, the mortal effects of work and rough usage. We are supplied during our youth with a second set of, to the physiologist, mysterious organs called teeth, which, though enjoying a certain kind of life, and capable of undergoing some amount of vital wasting and repair, cannot be wholly made anew. When worn out they are not replaced. Every one, sooner or later, must loose his teeth, either by dint of mere hard work, or through decay brought on by ill-usage and want of care. But through the loss of the one member, the tooth, the whole body suffers; the food taken is insufficient for the wants of the system, or, lacking the preparation it was wont to receive in the mouth, is unfit for the processes of digestion and nutrition. The man who has become toothless must sooner or later die, must sooner or later be starved to death, however long he may defer the end by careful artificial means. Even if decay were to touch directly with its finger no other part of the body, the loss of teeth would alone be sufficient to entail old age. But what is true of the teeth is also true of all the other organs of the body; they also enjoy and suffer partial but not complete renewal; they also, when worn out, are not replaced. Membranes, glands, muscles, nerve, and bones, all get damaged in the strife of life, are either "worn" down by the silent steady rub of every day life, or are "torn" by the sudden sharp pull of passing accident and disease. By wear or by tear all of them grow palsied as the years go on, and to few only of them can we give artificial aid. The sum of their feebleness is what we call old age.

It is the custom to speak of a fat old age and of a lean old age. There are folk whose bulk seems to keep pace with their years, who get more and more corpulent the older they grow. But it may be doubted whether persons of this build ever reach a very advanced old age. It is much more common to meet them on this rather than on the other side of threescore years and ten. Although their obesity is in some measure a shield against many adverse influences, and, moreover, lessens 'wear' in as much as it shuts them off from exertion, they are proverbially feeble against the attacks of accident and disease. Extreme fatness may, indeed, be regarded as of itself a disease, brought about by excep-

tional though prevalent causes rather than as a natural failure and decay. At all periods of life there may be witnessed in various organs an unhealthy tendency to form fat instead of flesh, and the same result may be induced at will through improper diet or the slow action of various poisons. Life is then rather choked up with things strange and foreign to its wants than blighted through lack of stuff and power.

The true old age is the shrivelled old age, the 'lean and slippered pantaloons,' whose 'shrunk shank' and 'childish treble' tell of the material changes wrought in the whole body through the failing strength of all the members. These material changes may all be gathered under two or three heads. The scantiness of fat, which may be first noticed, is of the least importance, and hardly needs remark; the withered grandsire may share that feature in common with his lean and wiry but active grandson. Of far more, or rather of utterly different moment, is the lack of, what for want of a better word may be called, pure flesh. In all living parts, not in muscle only but in skin and gland, in nerve and brain, there is to be found a substance (or group of substances) which holds in its hand, as it were, the reins of the life of the part in which it is situate. Out of this substance, this pure flesh, this scattered and omnipresent yolk or through it, everything in the body is made, and to it everything that we take as food runs. This it is which carries on and governs all vital processes, and which gives the body, not only its active powers of all kinds but also its suppleness, its spring, and in a wide sense its elasticity. It is the lack of this which, other causes contributing to the effect, makes the old man withered, rigid, inelastic, which makes his skin wrinkled, his bones brittle, his limbs stiff, his all and every part lean and shrivelled, at the same time taking away all his power. Another class of changes may be spoken of as the storing up in the senile body of the waste products of vital action, particularly of earthy matters. In every work of the body, some amount of living tissue is used up, some living stuff gives up its life and becomes dead and useless matter. In the heyday of life we get rid of this waste material as soon as it is formed, but in old age it lingers in and clings to the body, because the organs set apart for getting rid of it share in the general feebleness. Not only so, but the organs which put away seem to decay even earlier than those which take in, so that the system, in spite of decreasing flesh and decreasing work, gets charged with worn-out useless matters, stored away in chinks and crannies, or swimming in various fluids. The wheels of life in old age get clogged as well as worn. Lastly, notwithstanding this accumulation of waste products, notwithstanding the lean and withered aspect, the shrunk limbs and dry harsh skin, we

find, when we come to use the balance, that the flesh of old age is really more watery than that of manhood, so great has been the loss of all the true active living stuffs.

It is interesting to observe how old age does not invade the whole of the body at once, but seems to march victorious from one system of organs to another. It was a fancy of a brilliant physiologist that, as in the growth of a man there came first eating and drinking, then muscular, and lastly mental life, each arriving at its fulness in turn, so in the downward path, did no accident or disease intervene, the brain would fail first, next the muscles, and last of all the instruments of nourishment. But the fancy is not borne out by facts. We learn from the experiments on starvation that the last part to suffer from lack of food is the brain (and nervous system); the other members seem to deny themselves in order to nourish it. And in the long-delayed starvation of old age the same holds true; life seems to retreat from the ignoble to the more noble parts. The skin and glandular organs give the first token of decline, the muscles take up the tale, and the brain is the last to own it. Have we not often seen judgment and knowledge and wisdom borne on tottering limbs? The lean and slippered pantaloon lags behind far more in body than in mind; and when he comes to touch on mere oblivion, he is, indeed, near that "*sans* everything"—
M. F.

PENCILLED PAGES.

" We have strayed
Wild as the mountain bee, and culled a sweet
From every flower that beautified our way."

IN the following extract from a sermon by Theodore Parker, on "Conscious Religion a Source of Joy," there may be a phrase or two not in harmony with our own most cherished belief and reverence. But making allowance for this, there will, perhaps, be felt to be a something in his happy out-look at creation, from which Christians of more orthodox creeds might possibly do well to learn. It may be entitled—

SPRING JOYS IN THE LOWER CREATION.

"Look over the bountiful distribution of joy in the world. It abounds in the lower walks of creation. The young fish you

shall even now find on the shallow beaches of some sheltered Atlantic bay, how happy they are! Voiceless, dwelling in the cold unsocial element of water, moving with the flapping of the sea, and never still amid the ocean waves' immeasurable laugh—how delighted are these little children of God! Their life seems one continuous holiday, the shoal-waters a playground. Their food is plenteous as the water itself. Society is abundant, and of the most unimpeachable respectability. They have their little child's game which lasts all day. No one is hungry, ill-mannered, ill-dressed, dyspeptic, love-lorn, or melancholy. They fear no hell. These cold, whitefleshed, and bloodless little atomies seem ever full of joy as they can hold; wise without study, learned enough without book or school, and well cared for amid their own neglect. They recollect no past, they provide for no future, the great God of the ocean their only memory or forethought. These little short-lived minnows are to me a sermon eloquent; they are a psalm to God, above the loftiest hymnings of Theban Pindar or of the Hebrew king.

"On the land, see the joy of the insects just now coming into life. The new-born butterfly, who begins his summer life to-day, how joyous he is in his claret-coloured robe, so daintily set off with a silver edge! No Pharisee, enlarging the borders of his garments, getting greetings in the markets and the uppermost seat at feasts, and called of men 'Rabbi,' is ever so brimful of glee as our little silver-bordered fly. He has a low seat in the universe, for he is only a butterfly; but to him it is good as the uppermost; and in the sunny sheltered spots in the woods, with brown leaves about him, and the promise of violets and five-fingers by-and-by, the great sun gently greets him, and the dear God continually says to this son of a worm, 'Come up higher!'

"The adventurous birds that have just come to visit us, how delighted they are, and of a bright morning how they tell their joy! each robin and blackbird waking, not with a dry mouth and a parched tongue, but with a bosom full of morning psalms to gladden the day with 'their sweet jargoning.' What a cheap luxury they pick up in the fields; and in a clear sunrise and a warm sky find a delight which makes the pomp of Nebuchadnezzar seem ridiculous!

"Even the reptiles, the cold snake, the bunchy and-calumniated toad, the frog, now newly wakened from his hybernating sleep, have a joy in their existence which is complete and seems perfect. How that long symbol of 'the old enemy' basks delighted in the sun! In the idle days which I once had, I have seen, as I thought, the gospel of God's love written in the life of this reptile—for whom Christians have such a mythological hatred, but whom the good God blesses with a new, shining skin

every year—written more clearly than even Nazarene Jesus could tell the tale. No wonder! it was the dear God who wrote His gospel in that scroll. How joyously the frogs welcome in the spring, which knocks at the icy door of their dwelling and rouses them to new life! What delight have they in their thin piping notes at this time, and in the hoarse thunders wherewith they will shake the bog in weeks to come; in their wooing and their marriage song!

“The young of all animals are full of delight. God baptizes his new-born children of the air, the land, the sea, with joy; admits them to full communion in his great church, where He that taketh thought for oxen suffers no sparrow to fall to the ground without his fatherly love. A new lamb, or calf, or colt, just opening its eyes on the old world, is happy as fabled Adam in his Eden. With what sportings, and friskings, and frolickings do all young animals celebrate their Advent and Epiphany in the world of time! As they grow older they have a wider and a wiser joy—the delight of the passions and the affections, to apply the language of men to the consciousness of the cattle. It takes the form, not of rude leapings, but of quiet cheerfulness. The matronly cow, ruminating beside her playful and hornless little one, is a type of quiet joy and entire satisfaction, all her nature clothed in well befitting happiness.

“Even animals that we think austere and sad—the lonely hawk, the solitary jay, who loves New England winters, and the innumerable shellfish—have their personal and domestic joy, well known to their intimate acquaintances. The toad, whom we villify as ugly, and even call venomous, malicious, and spiteful, is a kind neighbour, and seems as contented as the day is long. So is it with the spider, who is not the malignant kidnapper that he is thought, but has a little, harmless world of joy. A stream of welfare flows from end to end of their little life—not very broad, not very deep, but wide and deep enough to bathe their every limb, and bring contentment and satisfaction to every want. Did not the same God who pours out the light from yonder golden sun, and holds all the stars in his leash of love, make and watch over the smallest of these creatures? Nay, He who leaves not forsaken Jesus alone never deserts the spider and the toad.

“Wait a few weeks and go into the fields, on a warm day, at morning, noon, or night, and all creation is a-hum with happiness; the young and old, the reptile, insect, beast, and fowls of heaven, rejoice in their brave delight. All about us is full of joy, fuller than we notice. Take a handful of water from the rotting timbers of a wharf; little polyps are therein, medusæ, and the like, with few senses, few faculties; but they all swim

in a tide of joy, and it seems as if the world was made for them alone; for them the tide ebbs and flows, for them the winter goes, the summer comes, and the universe subsists for them alone.

"Some men tell us, that at the other extreme of the scale, those vast bodies, the suns and satellites, have also a consciousness and a delight; that 'in reason's ear they all rejoice.' But that is poetry; not in reason's but fancy's ear do they rejoice. The rest is fact, plain prose.

"All animate creatures in their natural condition have, it is true, their woes; but they are brief in time, little in quantity, and soon forgot. When you look microscopically and telescopically at the natural suffering in the world of animals, you find it is just enough to tie the girdle and hold the little creature together, and keep him from violating his own individual being; or else to unite the tribe and keep them from violating their social being. So it seems only the girdle of the individual or the flock, and no more an evil when thus looked at than the bruises we get in our essays to walk. Suffering marks the outer limit of the narrow margin of oscillation left for the caprice of the individual animal or man—the pain, a warning to mark the bound."

BRIEF NOTICES OF BOOKS.

The Religions before Christ. BY EDMOND DE PRESSENSÉ, Pastor of the French Evangelical Church, and Doctor of Divinity of the University of Breslau. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

(By the same author.)

Jesus Christ: His Times, Life, and Work. London: Jackson, Walford, & Hodder. 1866.

IN a brief notice in a former number of M. De Pressensé's work on the Redeemer, we expressed our sense of the service rendered to English Christians by the Messrs. Clark in giving them the opportunity of making themselves acquainted with the works of this accomplished and devout French Protestant pastor. We regret our inability to devote a sufficient space to an adequate review of those above-named. But that our readers may form an idea of that on the "Religions before Christ," we give an extract from the author's preface to the English translation, only adding that the task which the author set himself to perform he has well accomplished:—

"The presiding idea . . . is that which animated Saint Paul in his discourse at Athens, when he found, even in that focus of Paganism, religious aspirations tending to Jesus Christ. I have endeavoured to show that the whole of the

ancient world, notwithstanding its depravity and short-comings, concluded by desiring and seeking "The Unknown God," by demanding Him from all forms of worship, from all schools of philosophy. The work of preparation in the pagan world consisted in the development of this immense, this painful desire—too often, alas! sullied and alloyed; but it was a flame kindled by God himself, and could not be extinguished. It is thus evident that I do not limit the work of preparation to Judaism, though it was only in this privileged land of Judæa that this work was directly pursued. To the Hebrew people alone were confided the sacred oracles; they alone had prophets; but nowhere was the human soul abandoned by its Author: He who was its source, never under any sky ceased His action upon it. This fact I have endeavoured to prove by the history of the different religions. I have raised no altar to human pride; for I believe no fact comes out more clearly from the study of the different civilizations, than man's utter powerlessness to save himself. While, on the other hand, I know nothing more calculated to rejoice the Christian's heart, than the firm persuasion that God has from the beginning included the whole race of Adam in His beneficent designs, and that, as Saint Paul says, 'He hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.' These ideas were dear to the Church of the first centuries, and were formalized in the boldest manner by Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria. It would be well, if they could in our day be recovered from oblivion. Now, when modern science is resuscitating the religions of ancient Asia from the grave in which they seemed to be for ever sealed up, and throwing a new light upon the more virile religions of the West, it is of the last importance that it should be proved, by an exact scrupulous study of facts, that Jesus Christ, the Christ of the Scriptures, the Eternal Son of God, the Redeemer, was truly, as the prophets expressed, 'The Desired of nations.' In proving this we prove that He is essentially the desired of every soul of man, that there is a profound affinity between conscience and Him, and that Tertullian was not mistaken when he wrote the '*Testimonium animæ Naturaliter Christianæ*.'

The second work named at the head of this notice is one which it gives us cordial pleasure to recommend. It is one of those books which make us realize our obligations to M. Rénan and similar writers who, by devoting their often great talents to the task of undermining and exploding the common faith of Christendom, have called forth some of the noblest efforts of accomplished Christian authorship. The Christian church is none the worse for being roused up in all her faculties, and kept awake and watchful, with brain and hand and heart taxed to the full. What the Indian mutiny did for the British name, calling forth the utmost gallantry and skill and heroic devotedness, that the assaults upon the faith once delivered to the saints are doing for those who are resolute to abide by the old flag first given to Evangelists and Apostles to unfurl in the sight of the nations. We have no fears for the result. The church after all is founded upon a rock. Abuses will get corrected. Accretions and crudities will fall off. And the Christianity of the future will come to be more thoroughly the Christianity of the beginning, more in harmony with "the simplicity that is in Christ."

M. de Pressensé is doing good service in the honourable campaign to which the church is summoned. His book "*Jesus Christ: His Times, Life, and Work*," we may honestly call a great boon to a large class of our countrymen—all those, in fact, who are not so familiar with the subject as they feel the present crisis requires that they should be. Nearly half the volume (of 560 pp.) is taken up with preliminary questions; by no means the least valuable portion. Indeed, to many readers (the class already intimated, for instance) perhaps the most valuable. That they may form some idea of the author's aim and spirit, we add an extract or two from the Preface.

"The plan of my book is simple. I have first treated the preliminary questions which hold the approaches to the subject. Is it true that the cause of the supernatural is, as is asserted, a lost cause? Is there no escape from the necessity of mutilating, from the very outset, a history which loses its proper character so soon as it is divested of the idea of a sovereign God, capable of interposing in our destinies by unforeseen acts? I have endeavoured to set reasonable arguments against the peremptory affirmations, which are the weapons used in our day by the adversaries of the supernatural. MM. Rénan and Strauss, and all the disciples of the Tübingen school, deny to Christianity any character of originality; according to their version of it, it is the offspring of the wedded genius of Greece and the East. I have set aside this theory by a rapid glance over the religions which preceded the Gospel. I have drawn as complete a picture as I might of the Judaism of the Decline in Palestine and in Egypt; and I hope to have established, that Jesus, so far from drawing His doctrine from the schools of Jerusalem, or the transmitted influences of Alexandria, was the living contradiction of all that surrounded him. The importance of such a result, if it is really attained, cannot be misconceived.

My aim is not so much to demonstrate any theory, as to show Jesus such as I see Him, such as He appears to me in the Gospels, such as I worship Him, and to say to my contemporaries—Does this image of Christ seem to you to correspond better with the truth of facts than those forms under which He has been recently represented to you from the naturalistic point of view? Is it more in harmony with the psychological laws which demand the unity of the moral being? Have we faithfully observed the principles of the philosophy of history, which refuses to admit effects without a cause, and to assign as the motive power of the wide and deep revolution which marks the commencement of our era, an intangible myth, a religion without any fixed doctrine, a faith without a God?"

Jehovah's Jewels. By REV. JOHN LEECHMAN, M.A., LL.D.
London: Elliot Stock.

Christian Fruitfulness. By JOSIAH VINEY. London: John Snow.

Books which have not much depth or vigour of thought are not therefore necessarily useless or uninteresting. Ease, grace, geniality of spirit, and unpretentiousness of style, disarm the severity of criticism, and we can be thankful to the writer who puts old familiar truths in a healthy happy way. We have some friends in the world of books, as in the world of men, whom we highly esteem although they are, intellectually, commonplace. But the first of these volumes makes us feel that nothing is more wearisome than a thoroughly commonplace books written in a stilted, jerky, oracular style. Truisms so put are first wearisome, then irritating. It is intended, we presume, to help to supply the demand for "devotional reading"; but attempted pithiness of style will not hide poverty of thought, and to hammer out the grand imagery of Scripture into tedious theological platitudes is neither gratifying to the taste nor profitable to the soul.

Mr. Viney's book is a volume of sermons, which, though not of the type known as "intellectual," are sober, sensible, and good, giving evidence of careful conscientious preparation, and especially of that preparation of the heart in which the preacher's chief strength lies. As occasional sermons, preached "previously to meeting at the table of the Lord," they are worthy of high commendation. The faithfulness and fulness of their statements, and the earnestness and kindliness of their spirit, would be likely to deepen the sense of Christian responsibility, and suitably to impress the heart.

Many "hearers" need to be frequently reminded that something

more than receptivity is necessary to constitute a good Christian. For the sake of such, as well as for the encouragement of those who know the joy of Christian work, we wish Mr. Viney's book a wide circulation.

Aids to Bible Reflection. For the Daughters of Great Britain. London: James Nisbet & Co.

THIS book consists of a series of chapters on the chief subjects of Bible history, beginning with Paradise and ending with Female Influence in the Primitive Christian Church. These chapters are supposed to be letters addressed by a mother to her daughter at school, or rather, at "a finishing educational establishment." The idea and intention are good, but we are sorry the execution is not better. The good mamma is familiar with the least admirable phraseology of the orthodox (and well meaning) pulpit and platform of the day; and her pages reproduce it and her views are limited by it too constantly. The English is of a kind which, we hope, is gradually dying out, even in "finishing educational establishments;" and we trust that in private life this excellent lady does not use such hard words, and get entangled in such troublesome metaphors as here. She is quite competent to give useful Bible lessons, if she will but talk in the simple language of common life, and her wish to make the histories of the Bible attractive and instructive to young girls is a very worthy one.

Essays on Science and Theology. By the REV. ALBERT BARNES. London: Hamilton, Adams & Co.

MR. BARNES is known to many thousands of readers as a laborious student, a veteran author, and a voluminous and popular expositor. These Essays, which form a pleasing memento of a long literary life, have been given to the American public in various forms during the last thirty or forty years, and are now presented to the English reader in one compact and attractive volume, under the editorship of the venerable Dr. E. Henderson.

The subjects of the various essays are well chosen, and the treatment, if occasionally rather too rhetorical, displays considerable earning, vigorous common sense, methodical habits of mind, and warm religious feeling. A Review of Butler's Analogy seems to us to be one of the most interesting and able portions of the book, and there are some valuable observations in the last three essays, on "The Relation of Theology to Preaching," "Preaching to the Conscience," and "Practical Preaching," although, at the same time, we cannot fully endorse several of the writer's views on theology, and think that here and there he is mistaken as to matters of fact. Nevertheless, it is a good book, and well worth a careful reading.

A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Exodus, with a New Translation. By JAMES G. MURPHY, LL.D., T.C.D., Professor of Hebrew, Belfast. Edinburgh: Messrs. Clark. 1866.

DR. MURPHY's former volume we have not seen, but can say of this that it is the work of a competent scholar, who, firmly holding the common faith of the Church from the beginning on the character of the Pentateuch, feels the necessity, in a day like this, of carefully

revising the interpretations which, while science was in its infancy, easily passed unchallenged. Without encumbering his pages with perpetual references to writers whom he deems unsound and injurious, he has evidently written under a proper sense of the responsibility imposed on a commentator of the present day; and the book is the fair product of adequate learning and common-sense employed under the dictation of an intelligent belief in the authenticity and genuineness of this portion of the Bible. As so much has been said about the numbers of the Israelites, we may just mention that Dr. Murphy takes them to have been about 50,000 at the birth of Moses.

Elijah the Prophet. An Epic Poem. By G. WASHINGTON MOON Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, author of "The Dean's English." London: Hatchard and Co. 1866.

THIS is a very handsome volume, in small quarto, with thick, smooth-toned paper, and two stanzas only, Spenserian measure, on a page, delightful to look at; and as the subject is a noble one, and all that is known of the great Prophet is here brought together and put in pleasant, continuous narrative, we have no doubt it will be a very acceptable gift-book to many. And although we cannot rank this "Epic" among those elaborate songs for generations which men will never let die, and, indeed, have sometimes been tempted to ask, Where is the poetry? Yet we can honestly praise the intentions of the writer, and the spirit which breathes through his verse, and thank him for his book.

Everlasting Torments Unscriptural: Two Lectures to the Students at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. By WILLIAM GIBSON WARD. London: Elliot Stock.

MR. WARD seems to have suffered what to him appears injustice and harshness for his denial of the literal eternity of sin and misery, but he has allowed the treatment which he resents to have an unhappy effect on his own spirit. And when he speaks of local opponents as "small vermin," he "demolishing" of whom (or of which) "is beneath even his humble ambition," we can only express our utter disapprobation, and even more. "Non tali auxilio," &c. We fear the level to which Mr. Ward sometimes descends will deter those he is anxious to reach from the candid consideration of some things which are otherwise worth their serious pondering.

God's Week of Work. By EVAN LEWIS, B.A., &c. London: F. Pitman.

THIS little pamphlet is intended for Sunday-school teachers, members of Christian Associations, Mutual Improvement Societies, and young men generally; and, bating some points which we cannot here touch on, we cordially give it a good word in thus introducing it to their notice.

Lays of the Pious Minstrels : a Collection of English Sacred Poetry.
 Edited and Arranged by HENRY WRIGHT. Eleventh Thousand.
 London : Houlston and Wright.

ANOTHER but very welcome addition to our large collection of sacred poetry. Mr. Wright has displayed much excellent judgment and taste in his selection of poems for this attractive volume.

PERIODICALS.

[The following Notice was intended for our March number being an acknowledgment of Magazines received in January and February, but it was unavoidably omitted.]

WE have received several Periodicals, which we regret to have been hitherto unable to notice. The place of honour we may give to the *British Quarterly*, which has so long rendered such various and admirable service to the cause of Evangelical and Catholic Christianity, Political Truth and Progress, and healthful Literature. The first number under its new Editors gives the assurance we had reckoned on, that the successors of Dr. Vaughan are every way worthy of the task they have undertaken. The *Evangelical Magazine* is ably conducted, and seeks to be abreast of the claims of the day, on the brain and heart of the Christian. And the *Baptist Magazine* we presume fairly represents the intelligence and piety as well as the views of the majority of the body whose organ it is assumed to be. *Evangelical Christendom* is a Monthly Chronicle of the Churches, conducted by members of the Evangelical Alliance, and gives us a variety of information we are thankful to receive. The *Theological Review*, a Journal of Religious Thought and Life, is the quarterly organ of the Unitarian body, and, if we may judge from the January number, is fairly representative of the intelligence, culture, and piety of the more influential section. There is one article on the late Rev. F. Robertson, by Miss Cobbe, who, of course, differs somewhat in her estimate of him from admirers in fuller sympathy with his religious beliefs; and one article on the *Charities of Europe* is written in a spirit of Catholicity which deserves to be recognized and reciprocated. The *Truth Seeker* is a small monthly, edited also by a Unitarian Minister, with strong sympathies and equally strong antipathies. Though last, not least, we are happy once more to see a copy of our old friend, the *Eclectic*. The number before us pleases us much; broad and catholic in its spirit, there is no lack of vigour or mental power and discrimination, fresh and racy and interesting. Let us give a word of welcome to the *Pulpit Analyst*, although we can only mention one Article, a Review of Dr. Candlish's *Fatherhood of God*, in which we heartily concur. *The Sword and the Trowel*, edited by C. H. SPURGEON, professes to be "a record of combat with Sin and Labour for the Lord." What Christian does not sympathize with the two-fold work, when attempted in the right spirit, with knowledge and charity combined with zeal?

THE CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR.

JUNE, 1866.

THE ROUND TABLE.

CHAPTER VI.

"THE HARP THAT ONCE"—INTERRUPTION—THE SECRET CONCLAVE
—THE RESOLUTION—CONFERENCE—ISSUE.

WHEN, in our opening chapter, Mr. Langston was first introduced to the reader, he was a man considerably past middle life, perhaps nearer sixty than fifty. It was the month of September, and the robin was the bird whose note was most conspicuous. He was sitting in the arbour, but he was sitting there alone; very sad, except as the sadness of his spirit had been changed into another mood by circumstances that had tended to disturb and chafe him. But many many things have happened between the loss of his noble boy, which we mentioned in the last chapter, and the early evening at which we now find him in the arbour. For, as so often is the case in life, one severe calamity ushered in another, till the once happy home seemed now to have been taken possession of by Grief and Sadness. The nursery was silent. It was a room that was seldom even entered now. No nursemaid was needed. And there were other chambers that were equally superfluous, rooms that Mr. Langston never went into. The house had a solitary look about it, and the footsteps of those that moved about in it sounded hollow and ghost-like. There was no merry-ringing laughter now; there was no gentle matronly voice. The house was too large for its inmates. People used to say that Mr.

Langston should move into another—that the change would be good for him—that while he remained at The Gables he would never recover his spirits. Every room seemed haunted. There was not one that did not speak of the Past,—the Past which comes again—never! Every chair, every footstool was like a living thing, and instinct with a thousand memories. Even the touch of a door-handle often thrilled to the heart. Everything throbbed with sensitiveness, and the homeliest things had been elevated into dignity by pathos. The piano was seldom opened. Only now and then were its strains heard. But sometimes of an evening, in the twilight hour, when the jasmine sent its faint perfume in at the opened window, and through its light and elegant green foliage the mild evening star might perhaps be seen looking in with a soft and loving aspect, and making one feel as if there were some subtle mysterious affinity between souls and stars (which may be perhaps), Mr. Langston would sit before the instrument, lost in pensive thought which it was a luxury to indulge, although perhaps also a luxury that did not tend to the increase of strength. And presently a few touching plaintive chords might be heard, two or three bars very slowly and pathetically played, it might be of Weber's Last Waltz (so called). Then some hymn breathing of resignation would suggest itself, and the Christian mourner would try to sing it, succeeding but indifferently; till perhaps the once strong man—and indeed still strong when duty compelled him to face either work or persons that made a demand upon his energies—overpowered, would burst into tears, and throw himself on a low couch, in all the prostration of utter heart-broken sadness.

Does the reader happen to know four verses written by the late Rev. Charles Wolfe, author of the famous lines on the burial of Sir John Moore, and entitled simply, "To Mary"? They were written, his biographer tells us, in his distant and lonely Irish parsonage, and written in a flood of tears. He had been pacing his solitary chamber to and fro, indulging in the pensive, and humming the plaintive Irish air Grammachree, for which air Moore wrote the well-known verses, "The harp that once through Tara's halls," &c. Mr. Wolfe was very fond of this Irish melody, which went far down into his very soul, and in the mood we have mentioned wrote the following verses to the air. Let them be sung very slowly and tenderly.

If I had thought thou could'st have died,
I might not weep for thee;
But I forgot, when by thy side,
That thou could'st mortal be:

It never through my mind had past,
 The time would e'er be o'er,
 When I on thee should look my last,
 And thou should'st smile no more.

And still upon that face I look,
 And think 'twill smile again ;
 And still the thought I will not brook,
 That I must look in vain !
 But when I speak—thou dost not say,
 What thou ne'er left'st unsaid,
 And now I feel, as well I may,
 Sweet Mary ! thou art dead !

If thou would'st stay e'en as thou art,
 All cold and all serene—
 I still might press thy silent heart,
 And where thy smiles have been !
 While e'en thy chill, bleak corse I have,
 Thou seemest still mine own ;
 But there I lay thee in thy grave—
 And I am now—alone !

I do not think, where'er thou art,
 'Thou hast forgotten me,
 And I perhaps may soothe this heart,
 In thinking too of thee :
 Yet there was round thee such a dawn
 Of light ne'er seen before,
 As fancy never could have drawn,
 And never can restore.

On the afternoon or evening we have arrived at, Mr. Langston had been indulging in one of those reveries he was now so given to, and had been singing, in low plaintive tones that would have gone to the heart of a listener, these favourite lines, often indeed broken by disturbance of soul and voice, when Edith, his only surviving child, catching the too well-known sounds, stole gently in. Softly and tenderly she placed herself by his side for a few moments, and then, throwing her arms round her dear father's neck, sought to wile him away from the instrument, and by her gentle assiduous affection make up to him something of all his great loss. Alas ! with little effect. The tenderer she was, and the wiser, the more did her pleasant little filial endeavours make him think of the light of other days.

This afternoon, after a little affectionate remonstrance, she remarked that Mr. Croskill had left a letter at the door for him.

"Croskill !" said Mr. Langston, with a slight touch of impatience. "What can he want to write to me about ?"

"I wish," replied Edith, "he would never speak to me, and especially that he would not be so persistent in making me

shake hands with him ; there's something so very offensive about him."

"Yes, my dear," replied her father with a sigh ; "an unpleasant man, no doubt ; but we must take people as we find them, and try to be and do what's right."

Now Edith's repugnance was very natural, for Mr. Croskill was disagreeable in his person, and with a good deal of offensive forwardness and boldness in his manner. He was a tall, loose-jointed man, with a shambling, shuffling gait ; his freckled face was deeply seamed and scarred with small-pox ; his red hair looked untidy and unwholesome, and his hands were cold and flabby. Altogether an uncomfortable sort of person, no doubt ; and Edith almost shuddered at the thought of her recent contact with him. He was clerk to a lawyer in the town, who did all the more questionable kind of attorney work in the neighbourhood, and being apt with his pen and glib of tongue, and well-stocked with assurance, he had succeeded in wriggling himself into a position of undue importance in the church at Bablyk-Hythe.

I think it has been hinted that the character of the church had gradually undergone some change. The men who at the first had gathered so cordially round Mr. Langston had in the course of years disappeared. Many of them had gone to their rest, some had removed to a distance, and a few had grown old and been pushed aside by younger men. Now and then a strange family had settled in the town and become connected with the congregation ; and members from other churches had also joined Mr. Langston's church "by dismission," bringing with them notions of their own, and testing all things at Bablyk-Hythe by them, and judging Mr. Langston by the standard of perhaps the favourite minister whom circumstances had compelled them unwillingly to leave. So that there were some members of his flock whom he had not had the training of, and whose regard for him therefore was possibly but slight. Indeed, Mr. Langston was one of those ministers whose preaching is a thorough test of the character of hearers. Every one either liked or disliked him. No one could listen to him and remain unaffected one way or the other, and shrewd judges of human nature had been known to remark that it looked well for a man to like Mr. Langston's preaching. Certainly by means of it the thoughts of many hearts were revealed. The vulgar rich, the conceited and pretentious, the talkative and fussy and self-important, the canting folks that made talk about being "spiritual" the substitute for an honourable life, and the covetous and the mean, and some others, naturally disliked a man whose eye at a glance made them feel that he read them through and through. For

Mr. Langston understood human nature. He was the soul of honour himself, and could not tolerate anything like unrighteousness; aiming to be a true follower of the King whose very "first" attribute is "righteousness," he had a thorough scorn of all trickiness and meanness. His preaching was like himself, and went like a ploughshare through the cherished vices of the less consistent of his flock. In the pulpit he knew no fear but the fear of God, and gentle to all women and kind to all children, he was feared and disliked by all who secretly shrunk from judgment. But no consistent and thorough Christian drew back from him, even when his modes of putting doctrine were regarded with apprehension, as they sometimes were; for he was a thinker who, claiming to sit for himself at the feet of the Master, was not addicted to wearing the fetters of a party, and was one of those men sometimes characterized as being before their time, occupying beforehand the level on which the next generation will pitch their tents.

At the period to which we have arrived, Mr. Langston was scarcely to be congratulated on the body of men who had gradually come to constitute the diaconate. They were a very different set of men from those who nearly thirty years before had welcomed him to Bablyk-Hythe. And although I shall have little or no occasion to refer to them hereafter, yet I think I must slightly sketch two or three of them, in order that the reader may understand the letter that had been left at the door, and which was a joint production of these worthies, who had met in snug conclave by appointment to concoct it.

They had purposely fixed an evening for their meeting when it was supposed one of their number, Mr. Grosvenor, would be unable to attend; but this gentleman, suspecting something underhand, contrived to postpone a particular engagement, and presented himself at the meeting of his brethren, rather to their chagrin. The group on whose deliberations Mr. Grosvenor had unexpectedly broken in consisted of Mr. Kierney, Mr. Buzziman, and four others, besides Mr. Croskill, who had been smuggled into something like office as a sort of secretary or clerk to the church, very much to the annoyance of the pastor, who saw in it a design that was not avowed. Mr. Kierney was reputed to be the wealthiest man in the parish, having inherited an immense fortune from his father, who had amassed it "nobody knew how." He was said to be "the biggest fund-holder in that part of the country." A pale man, with pale thin lips, a cold grey eye, and thin ginger-coloured hair, people used to say that if you cut him he would not bleed. His step was so quiet that it almost seemed stealthy. He always spoke in a low voice, and never exerted himself in talking, or walking, or anything. Very quiet, too quiet indeed, he never got excited, never

fired up, but always had a perfect and cold control over himself. Although never in a passion (at least, not visibly), he could, with the utmost coolness and in the quietest way conceivable, say things that cut to the quick, and yet what could you charge him with? "He is so catty," one man said whom he had often made writhe, "his claws are cased in velvet." A sort of sneer, of which, however, it is but just to say he was not conscious, was habitual to him. The owner of extensive house and cottage property, he was immensely disliked by his poorer tenants; in fact, much more than disliked, for he stood on his rights, was bent on making his property yield the uttermost farthing, and mercilessly distrained for rent when in arrears. Many a poor widow carried her hard case to God, as against Mr. Kierney, yet who would bring a charge against him that could be taken cognizance of? For covetousness, close-fistedness, griping strictness with debtors, meanness of spirit, and the habit of wounding people's feelings are not church sins, but quite consistent with what the church after the world calls respectability.

Mr. Buzziman played second to Mr. Kierney's first. He had been poor, beginning life as "a charity-boy," but had somehow contrived to be very successful in business, though somewhat, it must be confessed, at the expense of character, for he had the reputation of going to the very outside verge of truth and honesty, and even at times of crossing the border. Indeed he had no natural repugnance to moderate fibbing and taking advantage in the quiet way, except when he was himself the victim of it. Plausible but tricky, he was said to pawn his soul to Mammon for all the week-days, taking it out for an hour on Monday and Thursday evenings, and of course for the whole of Sunday. On this holy day he was a holy man. He had a regular Sunday tone of voice, a Sunday mode of talking and thinking, which he assumed with his Sunday clothes. His membership, and especially his deaconship, were worth a great deal to him, a reliable passport for the next world, quite as good as to the Catholic holy water or consecrated wafer. He prayed piously, he sung piously, he distributed tracts piously, and he looked piously—on Sundays; and, no doubt, felt piously too—that is, on Sundays, and at chapel. Being unfortunately lame with one leg, he limped a good deal in walking, and censorious neighbours said his gait was just what such a man's should be. He was a widower and childless, but still kept on scraping and saving for the love of it, for he had no relatives, but yet parted with his money (when he could not help it) as sorely and reluctantly as a man parts with a tooth.

Mr. Clack, who was a rate-collector and doer of odd jobs in general, was conversant with everybody's affairs, an intolerably

fussy man, but with no serious blemish on his character in the world. If only fussiness were one of the Christian graces now, and especially if it were the first, he would have been a very gracious character indeed. Overflowing with egotism and self-sufficiency, he gave his opinion on everybody and everything with marvellous volubility. He was proud to be associated with so wealthy a man as Mr. Kierney, and to be called by him Brother Clack.

Mr. Bonser was a petty tradesman, a chandler, a good man, of fair character, but weak and ignorant, and somewhat spoiled by having been promoted to office. For though very ignorant—and of course very comfortably ignorant even of his ignorance—he felt himself called on to be a guardian of the church's spirituality and orthodoxy and general welfare. The church was his great world, and he himself being "a deacon," was therefore a great man. All his ideas of the prosperity of a church were coloured by his small business notions. He was for the visible and tangible, something that, if you could not absolutely show it on the counter or wrap it up in whitey-brown paper, like coffee, tea, tobacco, and snuff, you might at all events be able to talk about, and to put it down in black and white, as he entered things in his well-worn parchment-covered and olfactory day-book.

The other deacons, less marked in character, but humbler and better men, were little more than dummies, and followed suit, too much awed by the great wealth and quiet pertinacious self-will of Mr. Kierney, and the hard and overbearing manner of Mr. Buzziman, who himself was a more pliant tool in the hands of the former than he would like to avow to himself.

The business of the meeting was pretty nearly concluded when Mr. Grosvenor made his appearance, and after a few explanations, which he received as quietly as he could, Mr. Kierney said, softly and blandly—

"Mr. Croskill, just put the resolution we have agreed to into Mr. Grosvenor's hands. Will you, please?"

The clerk accordingly handed a paper, very neatly written in a lawyer's office style, to Mr. Grosvenor, who read it in silence, and found his breath coming thick and the colour mounting to his face; but wished to keep himself calm, if possible. The paper was as follows:—

"At a meeting held in the Vestry of the ——— church at Bablyk-Hythe, this twelfth day of September, in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and ———. Present—Messrs. Kierney (in the chair), Buzziman, Clack, Bonser, Taylor, Pixell, and Croskill (clerk), it was resolved—

"That the brethren present, deploring the low state of the church, as evidenced by the scanty attendance at prayer meet-

ings, and other similar tokens of diminished spirituality, beg to draw the attention of the pastor to the same, trusting that, by the blessing of the Great Head of the Church, he may be led to the adoption of such measures as may tend to the revival of prosperity in this part of Zion.

"Signed on behalf of the meeting,

"MATTHEW KIERNEY, Chairman.

Mr. Grosvenor felt that all eyes were upon him as he read the paper slowly a first time, and then a second. His first impulse was to tear it in pieces; but he controlled himself and remained silent. The others, too, were silent, Mr. Grosvenor looking searchingly first at one and then at another, till Mr. Croskill, taking the pen, inquired if he should add Mr. Grosvenor's name.

"Certainly not;" was that gentleman's only reply.

Then Mr. Buzziman began to descant on "the low state of things," at Bablyk-Hythe, and how "the Spirit seemed to be withheld," and how "a change of some sort was evidently needed," and so forth. When he ceased there was again an embarrassing silence.

"What do you say, Mr. Grosvenor?" asked Mr. Kierney, after a time. "Is not Brother Buzziman right? Is not a change of some kind among us very necessary?"

"Very necessary indeed, I think; certainly necessary;" was the reply of the gentleman appealed to.

"Then you agree with us?"

"In what?"

"In the propriety of doing something, of course."

"I agree with you in the propriety of doing something, of course," replied Mr. Grosvenor.

"Well, and do you not agree with us in the propriety of addressing our pastor on the subject?" asked Mr. Buzziman.

"I have no doubt," answered Mr. Grosvenor, "that Mr. Langston knows the real state of the church far better than the deacons do, and that what is unsatisfactory in it is far more painful and distressing to him than it can be to those who have taken the present very serious and, to my mind, offensive and dangerous step."

"What sort of a resolution would you adopt, then?" asked Mr. Kierney.

"I could write one," said Mr. Grosvenor, musingly, "in which I could heartily concur, and which I think it would be an omen for good, if we could all agree to adopt."

"By all means let us have it, then;" said the two leaders, who looked at one another not without a secret hope that all might yet be arranged to their satisfaction. Mr. Grosvenor took the pen, was silent for a few moments, during which he sat with his

eyes shut, then wrote, and erased, and wrote, and finally pushed the paper to Mr. Croskill (as clerk) to read aloud, which he did as follows:—

“We, the undersigned, having met—but without our pastor’s knowledge—to take into consideration the state of the church, beg, in the first place, to offer to our esteemed pastor our strongest assurances of unabated confidence and respect and love, while we tender him our deepest sympathy in the severe afflictions through which he has been called to pass. If in anything we can contribute to the soothing of his mind, or to the relieving of him in any duties that he may for the present find too taxing, it will be as much our pleasure as our privilege to do so.

“We are aware that his severe trials have rendered inevitable some interruptions of his plans for usefulness, but we have the melancholy conviction that the grave faults and deficiencies of some of the leading men among us, and the very unfavourable impression produced thereby on the world outside, are the main cause of all that we have to deplore. And accordingly we beg to assure our beloved minister that we will at once give ourselves to the faithful scrutiny of our own hearts and lives and characters, resolved thenceforth to lay aside all that is unworthy and humbly to renew the dedication of ourselves, body, soul, and spirit, to the will of our heavenly King.”

There was a dead silence when the voice of the reader ceased. Mr. Kierney’s pale face and lips were paler than ever, for he knew the significance of what Mr. Grosvenor had written. Mr. Buzziman flushed up in anger, which, however, he knew he must suppress, if possible, for he felt by this bold stroke of Mr. Grosvenor’s, that that gentleman now stood ready to take a firm course of his own, and he knew that single-handed he could carry all the best portion of the church with him. Conscience made cowards of the two men who, with Mr. Croskill, had concocted the resolution. At length Mr. Kierney said with something of a sneer—

“Mr. Grosvenor evidently has a very high opinion of us. I am sure we are greatly indebted to him.”

“And I for one,” added Mr. Buzziman, “would thank him to explain himself.”

“Hear, hear,” said Mr. Clack.

“With all my heart,” replied Mr. Grosvenor; “I’ll explain as much as you please.”

“You seem to have something on your mind, which perhaps you had better disburthen yourself of;” said Mr. Kierney, sarcastically.

"I have indeed very much on my mind, and on my heart too," said Mr. Grosvenor, sadly, "which I should like to lay before you, if you think you can bear it; but I warn you that it will be more wholesome than pleasant for you to hear it."

"Oh, by all means let us have it out," said Mr. Kierney.

Mr. Grosvenor was silent for some moments. To tell the truth, he thought of Nehemiah at the most critical period of his life, and sought for help to be faithful without doing harm, if that were possible.

And then, with a deep sigh, he began to hold up such a mirror to Mr. Kierney and Mr. Buzziman as those men had never looked into before. He told them, but in the most sorrowful manner, what everybody in the town thought of them both, and maintained that the leading men of a congregation could not be so regarded without a most injurious effect being thereby produced on the church. And though the budget of facts he opened was a full one, there was not a man listening to him who did not secretly know that he was right when, following up one exposure with another, he at last left it to their consciences to say whether the real cause of whatever was to be deplored was not to be found in that vestry that evening.

When he had concluded, with a manly but kind protestation that he had truly spoken out of exclusive desire to arrest evil, and, if possible, bring about a better state of things, Mr. Kierney remarked—

"Since Mr. Grosvenor has seen fit to rake up all the gossip of the place against the characters of some of us, I for one think so very consistent a man as he of course is himself, ought not to contaminate himself by remaining among us any longer. It is well to know who are our friends. And Mr. Grosvenor is what I always suspected—a minister's man. That is what he is, and no friend of ours."

"Any one might be proud to have the friendship of such a man as Mr. Langston;" replied the other, "but I hope I am not otherwise than a friend to all of you. I have spoken to-night, I assure you, in sorrow far more than in anger."

"Well, for my part, I am not going to be priest-ridden for all the Langstons or Grosvenors in the world," said Mr. Kierney.

"That's good," said Mr. Buzziman.

"And yet," remarked Mr. Grosvenor, with something of a sigh and a smile, "there's something worse for a church than to be priest-ridden, especially if the priest, as you call him, is worthy."

"Worse than to be priest-ridden!" exclaimed both Mr. Kierney and Mr. Buzziman at once, and in a tone of utter incredulity.

"Yes, far worse," returned the other.

"Then I should like to know what that is," said Mr. Kierney, with a sneer.

"Come, then, pray tell us," said Mr. Buzziman, "what is worse than to be priest-ridden."

"To be deacon-ridden;" said Mr. Grosvenor, quietly.

After some desultory talk Mr. Grosvenor almost pathetically sought to bring his brethren to a better mood, but in vain. Mr. Kierney maintained that the church needed new life to be imported into it, that Mr. Langston laid his afflictions to heart more than was good for the church, and that he ought for shame to rouse himself, and that it was their business to "poke him up a little."

"In the space of three short months," said Mr. Grosvenor, not without emotion, "it has pleased God utterly to desolate his home, leaving the once happy husband and father with but one child spared to him."

"Other men have had to bear bereavement as well as he," said Mr. Buzziman.

"I think it would do him good to move," said Mr. Kierney.

"And you have bid him money for his house, report says," remarked Mr. Grosvenor.

"Report may be right, for once," said the other.

"You want it for your son, it is said," observed Mr. Grosvenor.

"The Gables would suit my son very well for the present."

"And is it true that you have offered him £500 for the house?" asked the other.

"It may be," was Mr. Kierney's answer.

"And you know that such is the rise in the value of land and house property in the town that it would fetch at least £950, if put up for auction to-morrow;" said Mr. Grosvenor, indignantly.

On this, the conversation became almost an altercation, Mr. Buzziman justifying his leader by saying, "Mr. Langston was not obliged to sell because a bid had been made him."

After a time, as it was getting late, Mr. Grosvenor sought to bring matters back to the point from which they had started, and proposed that the resolution should be withdrawn.

"I move," said Mr. Kierney, "that the resolution be sent to Mr. Langston by the clerk."

"I second it," said Mr. Buzziman.

Mr. Clack said, "Hear, hear!"

Mr. Bonser said he should go with the rest.

The others held up each a hand, but timidly, and as if under compulsion, and the meeting broke up.

The next day Mr. Croskill enclosed the resolution in an *offensive* letter from himself, and left it at The Gables, as we have seen.

(To be continued.)

HADES, OR THE INVISIBLE WORLD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE DESTINY OF THE HUMAN RACE."

FEW subjects of meditation have a deeper interest for any of us than those which relate to the condition of our departed friends. Even while we stand weeping over our dead, the inquiry forces itself upon us—"Whither are they gone?"

The question may be understood in either of two senses. It may mean, "What is their eternal condition?" or, "Where are they *now*?" It is in the latter sense alone that I propose here to consider it.

In order to simplify the inquiry, it may be most advisable to deal *primarily* with the question as applicable to a redeemed child of God; and only incidentally in its supposed reference to one of whom so blessed a relation cannot be predicated.

We ask, then, first, "Where is *now* that peaceful soul which, but a little while ago, was with us rejoicing in the love of Jesus? Is it still conscious of existence, or is it calmly sleeping till the day of the resurrection?"

The supposition that, after death, the soul *sleeps*, is one which has at all times found Christian advocates; and there are still those who regard the teaching of Scripture as more favourable to this view than to any other. Such persons deserve at least a candid hearing.

The ground commonly taken by those who uphold the slumber of the soul is, that throughout the Old Testament its utter unconsciousness after death is always assumed; that in the New Testament, death is called a "sleep," which, it is said, when sound and deep always supposes the absence of consciousness; that Paul, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, argues, "If the dead rise not, . . . then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (1 Cor. xv. 18), which, it is thought, could hardly be the case if *their spirits* were with the Lord; that the apostle repeats this reasoning when, speaking of himself, he says, "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me *if the dead rise not*?" (ver. 32). Whereas, it is argued, if his soul entered at once into a state of blessedness, martyrdom would obviously be a great gain;* and

* "Truths for the Times," No. 1, "On the Intermediate State." By the Rev. J. C. M'Causland, M.A., Rector of Clonmore, Dublin.

finally, that the cold and repulsive ideas generally connected with the supposition of the soul's slumber exist only in the imaginations of those who cherish them. This last point is argued with much effect in a little book entitled "A View of the Scripture Revelations concerning a Future State," which has always been attributed to Dr. Whately.

The reasoning of the archbishop, sound as far as it goes, by no means, however, meets the case. The penitent thief asks the Lord to remember him *when He comes in His kingdom*. The answer of the Redeemer, who ever grants far more abundantly than we can either ask or think, is, "*To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise.*" Yet some days after this we find our Lord himself declaring that He had not then ascended to His Father (John xx. 17). The paradise, therefore, in which the thief found himself on the day of the crucifixion must have been in the intermediate state. To understand the reply of Christ as merely intimating that the request of the brigand was granted is both forced and unnatural.

Again, it is not easy to imagine that Paul would have thought it a happier thing to die than to be glorifying the Saviour on the earth, if he had supposed that he was not to be with Christ for two thousand years or more. This surely cannot have been his thought when he wrote those emphatic words, "*To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*" And again, "*To depart and to be with Christ, which is far better.*" His own experience contradicts the supposition; for he tells us elsewhere that he himself had been caught up into "*paradise,*" and heard words which it was not lawful to repeat, evidently pointing, as Bishop Bull says, to "*a world where mysteries may be heard and learned far surpassing the reach of frail mortality.*" Nor is there the weight which is supposed in the apostle's declaration that "*if the dead rise not, then they that have fallen asleep in Christ are perished,*" since he is speaking of the resurrection only as involving a future life. *Apart from* the resurrection, it is admitted there is no evidence whatever in Scripture of a world of spirits. It is only as the invisible world stands connected with the reconstitution of humanity at the last great day that it has any ground of existence.*

Further, in the parable of Dives and Lazarus a very different doctrine from that of the soul's unconsciousness is clearly taught;

* "The reorganization of the body implies the restoration of the mutual dependency of mind and matter; implies that man shall entertain, once more, those *mixed sentiments* that result from such a union; shall, in a word, become again and for ever a creature of action, enterprise, and achievement. Nothing of this sort belongs to the state of dissolution."—*Saturday Evening*, p. 395.

for granting, as we cheerfully do, that parables are not to be used as *proofs* of doctrine, it is impossible to suppose that any teaching of this kind from the lips of Christ could be calculated to *mislead* those who listened to it. Yet it is hard to say how any other result could follow if it was not intended to illustrate and confirm the belief that *immediately* after death the soul becomes conscious of its moral condition, and to a certain extent enters upon a retributive one. To be in "Abraham's bosom," and to be "comforted" thereby, is surely something very different from insensibility; while the desire expressed by the rich man that Lazarus should visit and warn his family *then living on the earth*, is utterly inconsistent with any other supposition than that consciousness, reflection, memory, and mental activity come into exercise immediately after decease.

Connect with this the direct assurance of the Lord to Martha,—"He that believeth on Me shall never die;" the appearance of Moses and Elias on the mount of transfiguration; the cry of the "souls under the altar;" and St. Paul's declaration that to be "absent from the body" is to be "present with the Lord," and it is surely all but proved that the soul lives when the body dies, even if Christ did not positively assert it when He said God "is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto Him" (Luke xx. 38).

That *some* good men should have ceased to believe in this great truth is, however, not surprising when it is recollected how many perverse and unscriptural notions have in the course of time been engrafted thereupon. The *natural immortality* of the soul—a doctrine unknown to the Bible, and evidently of heathen origin*—is one of these. The very frequent separation of the Christian's best and brightest hopes from the coming of the Lord is another. The unscriptural belief—all but universally entertained—that the souls of the righteous at death go at once to heaven, and those of the wicked to hell—a notion that renders both a world of intermediate existence and a day of judgment alike superfluous, is a third. For if these ends are attained at

* Not, however, in the Christian sense. "The Chaldeans and Babylonians, believed that the soul was of the Divine nature—an emanation from the fountain of all intelligence." . . . "Zoroaster taught that the human soul is a particle of Divine light which will return to its source and partake of its immortality. . . . Plato says, "In the periodical revolutions of nature, souls separated themselves from the source or fountain of soul, and descended into the lower region of the world; upon death they again pass into other animals, or ascend into superior regions, and are converted into beings of a higher order, according to their present conditions of defilement or purification." Quoted from "Life or Death," by Edward Falconer Littons M.A., Barrister-at-Law. Longmans.

death, why should we think much either of the resurrection or of the second advent?

Without therefore admitting, for a single moment, the sleep of the soul, it is well to notice, and to learn from the observation, how unsupported by Scripture are many of the vague opinions that prevail in the Christian world in connection with the well-grounded belief of continued life in the invisible. Easy is it to say, "If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," and to infer from thence that into this heavenly habitation the soul enters the moment it departs from earth; but the conclusion proceeds on an entire forgetfulness of the fact that Scripture tells us that this inheritance of the saints is, as yet, "*reserved* in heaven;" that it will not be "*revealed*" until "the last time;" that it will "be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ;" and that in the Apocalyptic vision, the New Jerusalem is seen by John "coming down from God out of heaven," after which "the tabernacle of God shall be *with men*."

Nor can it, I fear, be disputed that many, while dwelling on this supposed felicity at the hour of death, have ceased either to think or care much for the resurrection of the body, the great hope set before us in Scripture. Yet not till then—humanity being reconstituted and manhood restored—will the saint enter upon his glory, or, properly speaking, see the Saviour face to face. Then, and not before, will Jesus fully receive us to Himself, *coming to His redeemed* for that purpose wherever they may be; *bringing them with Him* to judgment; and making them like Himself when they "shall see Him as He is" (1 Thess. iv. 13—18).

It cannot be denied, and it therefore ought never to be forgotten, that Paul's one theme of consolation for the believer under all sorrow is *the coming of the Lord*; hence, whatever may be our conclusion as to the immediate state of the happy dead, we must never ignore the fact that all will be incomplete and imperfect until that great and crowning event is consummated. Those that have gone before are not "*without us*" to be "*made perfect*" (Heb. xi. 40). The believer and his Lord are to be "*glorified together*" (Rom. viii. 17).

The modern doctrine about departed saints mingling with the angels, joining in their praises, and harping with their harps, was in the Primitive Church neither accepted nor esteemed. Individuals indeed there were who held it, and, on this ground among others, denied the resurrection, affirming that it had "*passed already*," having, as they alleged, practically taken place at the death of each believer; but these are spoken of only as having

"overthrown the faith of some," and are evidently regarded as persons to be avoided or rebuked. Justin Martyr remarks, "It is the doctrine of *heretical* persons to say that the souls of the blessed instantly, upon the separation from their bodies, enter into the highest heaven." * The Council of Trent (SESS. xxv.) made this the foundation of "the invocation of the saints departed," that they "do now reign with Christ, and enjoy eternal felicity in heaven." † The testimony of Scripture is clear, that *not* till the hour shall come "when all that are in the graves shall hear His voice," will Christ "reward every man according to his works." Peter distinctly affirms that David, the man after God's own heart, had not in his day "ascended into the heavens" (Acts ii. 34).

Respecting the earlier revelations of the Old Testament little can be asserted with confidence. We have certainly no proof that by such expressions as "Thou shalt go to *thy fathers* in peace" (Gen. xv. 15), or, He "was gathered to *his people*" (Gen. xxv. 8), *more* was meant than that he of whom they were spoken should follow his progenitors to the grave, the "house appointed for all living." But, on the other hand, it is far from improbable that, since the early Egyptians believed in the passage of the soul into a land of shadows immediately after death, ‡ the patriarchs shared to a limited extent in this view. Job seems to intimate something of the kind when he speaks of himself as going "to the land of darkness and the shadow of death" (x. 21, 22); and again when he says, "The *Sheol* is naked before Him" (God) (xxvi. 6). He speaks too of this invisible world as a prison, having gates and doors: "Have the *gates of death* been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?" (xxxviii. 17). We may not then be altogether wrong if we infer that even THE PATRIARCHS had, although but dimly, a persuasion that after death the soul of the departed passed into a world of shadows, there to wait its final destiny at the hand of God.

The language of THE PSALMS is much more decided on this point. The well-known passage quoted by Peter in the Acts (ii. 27—31) is of this character: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in *Sheol* [N. T., Hades], neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One [in the grave] to see corruption" (Psa., xvi. 10). Again, "God will redeem my soul from the hand of the *Sheol*" (xlix. 15). And

* Appendix to Sheppard's "Autumn Dream."

† Milner "On the Intermediate State." *Masters*.

‡ "Plutarch speaks of the Amenthes of the Egyptians corresponding to the Hades of the Greeks, a subterranean region to which the souls of dead men were conveyed" (Isis and Osiris—quoted from Litton).

again, "If I ascend up to heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in *Sheol*, behold, Thou art there." (cxxxix. 8.)

THE PROPHETS recognize, even for the heathen, a world of spirits, in which the dead are regarded as confined till the day of judgment. One instance alone will suffice as an illustration. It is that in which Israel is represented as taking up a proverb against the King of Babylon: "*Sheol* from beneath is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us?" (Isa. xiv. 9, 10.)

It is scarcely needful to say here that *in every instance* in the Old Testament where the word "hell" is used in the English translation, it means something very different from the lake of fire; it is simply another word for *Sheol*, and this whether it be applied to the invisible world, or, as it frequently is, merely to the grave. We gather, then, that the Hebrew prophets and poets, like the patriarchs, only more clearly, held to the doctrine that the soul of man at death, whether righteous or unrighteous, passed into what they regarded as a sort of shadowy prison, where it awaited the general resurrection. They no more dreamt of denying the existence of a land of the dead than they would that of a land of the living.

That Old Testament saints had, however, no *clear or definite* views on the subject seems probable from such expressions as these,—“The dead know not anything.” (Eccles. ix. 5.) “Shall the dust praise Thee? shall it declare Thy truth?” (Psa. xxx. 9.) “In the grave who shall give Thee thanks? In death there is no remembrance of Thee.” (Psa. vi. 5.) But this is not to be wondered at; for shadows, and little but shadows, hung over the tomb till Christ came and “brought life and immortality to light.” To the chosen people, as to the patriarchs, *Sheol*, when it implied more than the grave, was simply a state of silence and darkness, an object not of desire, but of *aversion*. The marvellous change which took place in this particular after the Lord’s advent—death being then coveted rather than dreaded—is itself evidence that in relation thereto old things had passed away, and all things had become new.

In the New Testament various indications may be found that such a place as *Hades*, distinct on the one hand from the grave, and on the other from heaven, really exists. Paul seems to refer to such a state when he says, “O death, where is thy sting? O *Hades*, where is thy victory?” Here death is supposed to have taken the body, and *Hades* the soul. Peter can scarcely have any other place in view when he speaks of Christ preaching to

the "spirits in prison." Christ himself is represented in the Apocalypse as saying, "Behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of *Hades* and of death." (Rev. i. 17, 18.) The two are evidently not one and the same. Again, "I looked, and behold a pale horse; and his name that sat on him was Death; and *Hades* followed with him." (vi. 8.) And once more, "The sea gave up the dead [bodies] which were in it; and death and *Hades* delivered up the dead [the one the body, the other the soul] which were in them." And "death and *Hades* were [each] cast into the lake of fire" (annihilated), death being *swallowed up* of life, and the prison of *Hades* being emptied.

From these *and other passages* we seem at least to learn, first, that as a fact *there is* an intermediate state where believers, clothed probably in some appropriate and ethereal vehicle, *wait* for the final triumph of the Redeemer; secondly, that entrance into this state succeeds to death instantaneously, and is probably simultaneous with decease; and thirdly, that the condition of the soul there, while peaceful, is not one of perfect happiness.

Dr. Maywahlen seems to think that "as the history of the people of Israel is a type of the history of every individual as well as of the whole human race, so does the long sojourn of that people in the desert of Arabia prefigure our sojourn in the intermediate state." This may be fanciful; but he is certainly not fanciful when he affirms that "the hopes and expectations of most men relative to their prospects on departing this life are, in fact, not grounded upon anything; every one expresses merely his own suppositions, notions, and desires; the believing Christian alone will hold himself without wavering to the unerring and everlasting word of God." There is "nowhere," he adds, "the slightest hint given in sacred Scripture which might lead us to suppose that the [redeemed] human soul, will, *immediately* upon its separation from the body, attain to the enjoyment of everlasting felicity. The notion that, freed from the body, it is *instantly delivered* from all sinful propensities, vices, and evil desires, and carried by angels to heaven, to remain there blessed for ever, and in the most intimate communion with the Deity, and similar sentimental dreams, are altogether irreconcilable with the doctrines and hints of the word of God." "On the contrary, the Holy Spirit reveals to us expressly that, although the body dies, the soul continues to live, and preserves its moral worth or worthlessness; so that just as is a man's *end* in this world will be his beginning in the intermediate state."*

"What end," he says elsewhere, "is the coming of Christ to

* "The Intermediate State," by Dr. Van Ulrich Maywahlen, translated by Dr. Schon. Seeley.

the judgment, at which all men, both good and bad, must appear? What end is a new heaven and earth to answer, if the dead, immediately on their departure from this world, are already in the enjoyment of perfect salvation? Whosoever believes that the soul of [a redeemed] man takes its flight to heaven immediately after departing from this world [practically] denies at the same time the second coming of Christ to judgment, and the resurrection of the body,—consequently, two of the most important doctrines of Christianity."

The *root* of the errors here lamented is unquestionably to be found in the views men take about salvation. If they would but consider that a perfect salvation in Scripture *means* complete deliverance from sin, and that the eternal peace and joy of the soul springs therefrom, they would not be long in perceiving that it is just as unreasonable to suppose that God instantly, and by the separation of the soul from the body, perfects holiness in His children, as it would be to imagine that He accomplishes a similar end in this world by any merely material force. God is one. His work is one. The principles of His government change not. And therefore it is as true now as it was in apostolic days, that our comfort in thinking of the condition of those who have departed in the faith is *not* a belief in their having been *transfigured by death*, but in looking for "the coming of the Lord," and that resurrection from the dead which is therewith connected.

The confusion engendered in the mind of the reader of the New Testament in our Authorized Version, by the arbitrary way in which the word "hell" is used, viz., sometimes for *Hades*, sometimes for *Gehenna*, and once, at least, for *Tartarus*, has no doubt greatly tended to promote the belief that men enter at once on their eternal destiny. It was worse than absurd in our translators to confound thoughts so diverse as—"Thou wilt not leave my soul in *Hades*," or "O *Hades*, where is thy victory?" with "Fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in *Gehenna*," or "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of *Gehenna*?" Yet in all these cases one word only is used in our version, and that one word is HELL. Most persons, therefore, naturally imagine that it was in *Gehenna*, or "the lake of fire," and not, as is the fact, in *Hades*, that the rich man opened his eyes and saw "Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."

That our Divine Redeemer entered this world of spirits between His death and resurrection certainly seems to be taught in Scripture. In this, as in other respects, He was made "like unto His brethren." His appearance in *Hades* was a consequence of His having assumed human nature. Hence we read

that He remained "three days and three nights in the *heart of the earth*," whereas His body was only placed in a cave into which men could enter. Hence, too, Paul, quoting the words of the Psalmist, says, "Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also *descended* first into the *lowest parts of the earth*?" or "under world" (Ephes. iv. 8—10), a phrase which in the Old Testament is used for the invisible (Psa. lxxiii. 9.) As applied to Christ, this submission to "the prison," and "the cord," is obviously the last and crowning act of humiliation. He became, for a time, subject to *Hades*. "His rising from thence was the first step in victory; His resumption of the body was the second; and His ascension to heaven was the completion of the whole." He was declared to be "the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead," or from among the dead. (Rom. i. 4.) Then it was He "brake the bars of *Hades*," spoiled "principalities and powers," and could rightfully say, "I was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore; and have the keys of *Hades* and of death."

(To be concluded in next number.)

ECCE HOMO.

(SECOND PAPER.)

ACCORDING to promise, we proceed to give some idea of the book which, in our last number, we introduced to our readers, confining ourselves in the present article to the First Part, and using as much as possible the *ipsissima verba* of the author, though without encumbering the page with the marks of quotation.

The key-note is early struck. The whole Roman Empire was in a condition singularly favourable to the reception of a doctrine and an organization such as that of the Christian Church, while Palestine was peculiarly prepared for some great movement of the kind.

In Judea John the Baptist had successfully revived the function of the prophet. He made his way back to the hidden fountains, and compelled the people to acknowledge in his appearance the voice of God. Armed with the old prophetic authority, he undertook a singular enterprise, the importance of which perhaps none could suspect, but which we see was nothing less than the foundation of the universal church. At his word crowds gathered to the Jordan, to renew, as it were, the covenant made between their ancestor and Jehovah. It

seemed the beginning of a new age, the restoration of the ancient theocracy, the final close of that dismal period in which the Hebrew race had lost its peculiarity. Great was the enthusiasm kindled; and yet eventually most of those who had yielded to it would sigh despondingly at the conviction apparently forced on them, that the theocracy had not in fact been restored, that the old routine had been interrupted only for a moment, that the baptized nation had sunk into the old pollution. But such persons were ignorant of one important fact. Two things were given to John to do—to inaugurate a new *régime*, and also to nominate a successor who was far greater than himself.

The Baptist's opinion of Christ's character is summed up in the title he gave him—the Lamb of God taking away the sins of the world. Passing by the allusion to the Jewish sacrificial system, we must remember that the Baptist's mind was full of imagery drawn from the Old Testament, and that the conception of a Lamb of God makes the subject one of the most striking of the Psalms. The Psalmist describes himself as one of Jehovah's flock, safe under His care, absolved from all anxieties by the sense of His protection, and gaining from this confidence of safety the leisure to enjoy without satiety all the simple pleasures which make up life—the freshness of the meadow, the coolness of the stream. It is the most complete picture of happiness that ever was or can be drawn. It represents that state of mind for which all alike sigh, and the want of which makes life a failure to most; it represents that heaven which is everywhere if we could but enter it, and yet almost nowhere because so few of us can. The Baptist himself was no lamb of God, but a wrestler with life, one to whom peace of mind does not come easily, but only after long struggle. His restlessness had driven him into the desert, where he had contended with thoughts he could not master, and from whence he had uttered his startling alarum to the nation. He was among the dogs rather than the lambs of the shepherd. He recognizes the superiority of him whose confidence had never been disturbed, whose steadfast peace no agitations of life had ever ruffled. He did obeisance to the royalty of inward happiness. One who was to earn the name of saviour of mankind had need of this gift more than of any other. He who was to reconcile God and man needed to be first at peace himself. The door of heaven, so to speak, can be opened only from within. Such then was the impression of Christ's character which the Baptist formed. What now did he expect him to do? He said that Christ bore a fan in his hand with which he would winnow the nation, gathering the good around him, separating and rejecting the bad. Further, Christ was to baptize with the holy

Spirit and with fire. John felt his own baptism to have something cold and negative about it. It was the renouncing of definite bad practices. But more than this was wanting. It was necessary that an enthusiasm should be kindled. The phrase, "baptize with fire," seems at first to contain a mixture of metaphors. Baptism means cleansing, and fire means warmth. How can warmth cleanse? The answer is that moral warmth does cleanse. No heart is pure that is not passionate; no virtue safe that is not enthusiastic. And such an enthusiastic virtue Christ was to introduce. The whole volume is a comment on this text.

The second chapter is on Christ's Temptation, the story of which is as unique as Christ's character. John had compared Christ to a lamb, a lamb of God. He was without ambition, and he had a peculiar unrivalled simplicity of devout confidence in God. Such is the person to whom it is announced by a great prophet that he has been called to a most peculiar, a pre-eminent career. But a most important circumstance is now to be mentioned. From the time of his temptation Christ appeared as a worker of miracles. He had wrought none before; but all authorities concur in representing him as possessing and using the gift after this time. To conceive of him therefore as becoming now for the first time conscious of miraculous powers is visibly the key to the whole narration. The excitement of his mind, caused by the nascent consciousness of supernatural power, is the temptation; the possession of special power constitutes the temptation. It is the greatest with which virtue can be assailed. What newer and stricter obligations are involved in the possession of new powers? A strange, and yet, given the exceptional circumstances, a most natural and necessary temptation. He is awestruck rather than elated by his new gifts. He declines to use for his own convenience what he regards as a sacred deposit committed to him for the good of others. In his extreme need he prefers to suffer rather than to help himself from resources which he conceives placed in his hands in trust for the kingdom of God. What course could so exactly suit the character of Christ as the Baptist paints it? What answer could more exquisitely become the Lamb of God than that quotation, "Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God?" Is it not substantially the same as that which the Psalmist uses in the very Psalm in which he pictures himself as one of God's lambs—"He prepareth for me a table in the wilderness?"

The next temptation is founded on the very confidence of divine protection, arising by reaction out of the triumph of faith. The third is less easy to understand, but its appropriateness to the character and condition of Christ is as clear. A vision of

universal monarchy rose before him. What suggested such thoughts to the son of a carpenter? what but the same new sense of supernatural power which tempted him to turn stones into bread, and to throw himself into the arms of ministering angels? This, with the Baptist's predictions and those Messianic predictions of the ancient prophets on which we can imagine he had been intensely brooding, might naturally suggest such an imagination. We are perhaps to understand that he was tempted to do something which, on reflection, appeared to him equivalent to an act of homage to the evil spirit. What then could this be? It will explain much that follows in Christ's life, and render the whole story very complete and consistent, if we suppose that what he was tempted to do was to employ force in the establishment of his Messianic kingdom. On this hypothesis the third temptation arises from the same source as the others; the mental struggle is still caused by the question how to use the supernatural power. Nothing more natural than that it should occur to Christ, that this power was expressly given to him for the purpose of establishing, in defiance of all resistance, his everlasting kingdom. That the Messiah was to put all enemies under his feet, and to crush all opposition by irresistible God-given might, was certainly the general expectation, and appeared legibly written in the prophetic books. And in the sequel it was because Christ refused to use his supernatural power in this way that his countrymen rejected him. It was not that they expected a king, and that he appeared only as a teacher; on the contrary, he systematically described himself as a king. The stumbling-block was this,—That professing to be a king, he declined to use the weapons of force and compulsion that belong to kings; and as this caused so much surprise to his countrymen, it is natural that he should himself have undergone a struggle before he determined thus to run counter to the traditional theory of the Messiah, and to all the prejudices of the nation. The tempter, we may suppose, approached him with the whisper, "Gird thee with thy sword upon thy thigh; ride on, and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things." If this was the temptation, how characteristic of the Lamb of God was the resistance to it, and how incomparably great the self-restraint involved in that resistance. One who believes himself born for universal monarchy, and capable by his rule of giving happiness to the world, is intrusted with powers which seem to afford the ready means of attaining that supremacy. By the overwhelming force of visible miracle, it is possible for him to establish an absolute dominion, and to give to the race the laws which may make it happy. But he deliberately determines to adopt another course, to found his empire upon the consent and not the fears of mankind; to trust himself,

with his royal claims and his terrible purity and superiority, defenceless among mankind; and, however bitterly their envy may persecute him, to use his supernatural powers only in doing them good. This he actually did, and evidently in pursuance of a fixed plan; he persevered in this course, although politically, so to speak, it was fatal to his position, and though it bewildered his most attached followers. But by doing so he raised himself to a throne on which he has been seated nigh two thousand years, and gained an authority over men greater far than they have allowed to any legislator, greater than prophecy had ever attributed to the Messiah himself.

These introductory paragraphs furnish the key to the whole book. Christ determined to found a universal monarchy, kingdom, church, commonwealth (call it what you will), to bring back something like the old theocracy, only on a higher level, and purified from all such conceptions as involved the use of physical force. He devoted himself to set up the kingdom of God. The idea in itself was not a novel one, although Christ's conception of it was emphatically his own. It is the object of the book to exhibit Christ's career in outline. No other career ever had so much unity. He formed one plan and executed it. John's message to the nation had been, "The kingdom of God is at hand." This proclamation Christ took up from his lips and carried everywhere. What then was it that under this name was anticipated? The conception of a kingdom of God was familiar to every Jew. Every Jew looked back to the time when Jehovah was regarded as King of Israel. The title had belonged to Him in a very peculiar sense. It had not been transferred to Him from a visible earthly king, but appropriated to Him so exclusively that for a long time no human king had been appointed, and when at last the people demanded to be ruled by kings the demand was treated by the most ardent worshippers as high treason against Him. And though a dynasty was actually founded, yet the belief in the true royalty of Jehovah was not destroyed or weakened, only modified by the change. As every nation has its favourite principles, its political institutions, to which it fondly clings, so the Jews attached themselves to the principle of the sovereignty of God; and as the best were now saddened at the evidence that the theocracy was a thing of the past, and that they were in a new age, with new influences about them, Greek and Roman principles and ways of thinking in the ascendant, so when the cry was raised, "The kingdom of God is at hand," it could not be mistaken. It meant that the theocracy was to be restored, that the nation was called to commence a new era, by falling back on its first principles. But the past can never be reproduced. The old, if brought back in triumph, will be changed in form if it is to last. It is

important to understand then under what form Christ proposed to revive the theocracy.

At the beginning of the nation the sense of Jehovah's sovereignty had been so absorbing, that it had been thought impious to give the name of king to any human being. But even then the notion of a human representative of Jehovah had been familiar, and His presence in particular men whom He raised up had been recognized as fully as His presence in nature. By and by, when an hereditary monarchy was founded, the spirit of prophecy, which at first protested, continued to be somewhat perplexed by the new institution. If the king was not a usurper of Jehovah's rights, what was he? Could the country have two kings, and could loyalty to the one be reconciled with loyalty to the other? From this perplexity it found an escape by picturing the earthly king standing in a peculiar relation to the heavenly. If the inspired hero or legislator of early times had been the favourite servant of Jehovah, the king must needs be more. He who represented Jehovah, who reflected not only his wisdom and justice, but his very majesty and royalty in the presence of his subjects, the assessor of Jehovah's throne, the man that was the fellow of the Lord of Hosts, deserved to be called, not his servant, but his son. But the more the dignity of the Jewish king appeared unutterable, the more unworthy of it did almost every individual king appear. The spirit of prophecy consoled itself for these failures by painting upon the future such a king as might satisfy all the conditions its enthusiasm demanded, and might deserve to sit by Jehovah's right hand and judge the chosen people.

Under which form then did Christ propose to revive the ancient theocracy? The vision of universal monarchy which he saw in the desert suggests the answer. He conceived the theocracy restored as it had been in the time of David, with a visible monarch at its head, and that monarch himself. He laid claim to the royal title. His biographers regard him as king by hereditary right, and attach great importance to the proofs of his lineal descent from David, though it does not appear that he shared their feeling. For he believed his royalty to rest on a higher right. He could not derive honour from David, because he held himself far greater than David. He was not a king by a title derived from his ancestor, but by the same title as his ancestor. David had owed his sovereignty to that heroic will and wisdom in which the prophet Samuel had recognized the divine right to rule. The same title had Christ in a yet higher degree, and it had been recognized and proclaimed with equal solemnity by the greatest prophetic authority of the age. During his whole public life he is distinguished from all other prominent characters of Jewish history by his unbounded personal pretensions, calling

himself habitually king and master, and claiming the character of that Divine Messiah for which the ancient prophets had directed the nation to look. But the new monarchy could not be a copy of the old. A new world had come into being. The difficulty had not occurred to Christ's contemporaries, who looked for one who should be neither more nor less than David had been. But Christ himself saw what others had no suspicion of, and that he must lead a life altogether different from that of David, and that the pictures drawn by the prophets of an ideal Jewish king were coloured by the manners of their times, and that, though they bore a certain resemblance to the true, the work before him was far more complicated and more delicate than the wisest prophet had suspected. It was in this way that the quarrel began between the Jews and their Divine Messiah. Their heads were full of the languid dreams of commentators, the impracticable pedantries of men who lived in the past. He was grappling with the facts of his age in the strength of an inspiration to which no truth was hidden, and no enterprise impossible. Accordingly he appeared before them, as it were, under a disguise, professing to be a king, though, in fact, he did none of the things they expected the king to do. It is not uncommon to describe the Jews as having simply made the mistake of confounding a figurative expression with a literal one. It is said that when Christ called himself a king he was speaking figuratively, but that the Jews persisted in understanding the expression literally. But this is to attribute to intelligent men a mistake worthy of children. We do not find in history whole nations misled and bloody catastrophes produced by verbal mistakes that can be explained in a moment. If a metaphor were all, Christ would have explained or withdrawn it. But he clung firmly to the title, and was there then nothing substantial in the royalty he claimed? Did he die for a metaphor? It is true that while he abdicated many of the functions of a sovereign, he yet regarded his royalty as not less substantial and far more dignified than that of his ancestor David. It was this that irritated the Jews—that he claimed the title, and would not fulfil the idea of royalty as they wished. A king who neither cared for a court nor an army, who preached and lectured like a scribe, yet in his weakness and insignificance could not forget his dignity, had his royal title often in his mouth, and lectured with an authority that no scribe assumed—these violent contrasts, this homely parody of their hopes, inspired them with irritation, and, at last, a malignant disgust which it is not hard to understand. That they were wrong we all admit; but what Christ really meant to do, in what new form to revive the ancient monarchy, is not so clear as the error of his adversaries. Let us try to understand Christ's royalty.

The Jews endeavoured to solve the difficulty by applying practical tests. They showed this king some of the tribute money of Rome, and asked whether they ought to pay. But he cared little for the matter, and bade them pay back to Cæsar's treasury what came from Cæsar's mint. Here was one function of a king that he refused. Then as the ancient kings of Judea had been judges, they invited him to undertake the office of a judge. Both a civil case and a criminal offence were submitted to him; but in both cases he declined the office. Their ancient kings had commanded their armies, but he expressly declared that his servants would not fight, and forbade his follower Peter to use the sword in his defence. What functions then did he undertake? For the perplexity arises from this, that, whereas Christ announced the restoration of the Davidic monarchy, and presented himself to the nation as their king, yet they failed to find any point of resemblance between him and an ancient Jewish king. But all this common estimate of royalty fails to go sufficiently deep. Before the appointment of a king the twelve tribes lived under a monarchy. Their national Divinity had been their king, and when a human king was appointed, he was king only in a secondary sense, and represented the Divine King in certain matters only, and not in others. In the habitual acts of administration the king officiated; but some acts Jehovah had done for the nation once for all, in which, as they were not to be repeated, none of the house of David could represent Him. Yet these were far greater than those which were regularly repeated, and declared much more magnificently the royalty of Jehovah.

These acts were two—the calling of the nation, and the institution of its laws.

The nation owed its separate existence to Jehovah's election of Abraham. The Invisible King called into being, created, the nation over which he was to reign, watching over the growth of a family into a nation, having sealed that family for Himself, and chosen the nation. But this had been done once for all. The king of the house of David might represent to the people their Invisible King at the head of an army, or on the judgment-seat; but he could not represent to them the founder of their commonwealth, the God who had been their dwelling-place in all generations. Then he did for the nation the second work. He gave it a law. In this work of legislation he was represented by Moses, of whom it is written that he was king in Jeshurun. But this, too, was a work done once for all. No king of the house of David ever represented the Invisible King in his capacity of legislator. To study the divine law diligently and administer it faithfully was the highest praise to which a David or Hezekiah could aspire. We may see then how Christ

might abdicate all the functions the kings had undertaken, and yet remain a king in a much higher sense than they. It was the fatal mistake of the most influential body in the nation, the mixed body of the Scribes and Pharisees, to regard the Mosaic law as final and unalterable. They fell into the besetting sin of lawyers in all ages. Assuming that nothing remained for the Messiah to do in legislation, they were driven to suppose that he too, like the ancient kings, would be but an imperfect representative of the Supreme King, and so they were driven to conceive him as occupied with administration or conquest; and had their dream been realized the Christ would have appeared in history far inferior to Moses.

On the other hand, Christ fixed his thoughts solely on the greater and more fundamental works of a heroic royalty. He deliberately proposed to himself to supersede the Mosaic legislation by a new one promulgated on his own authority. He undertook the part rather of a second Moses than a second David; and though he declined to take cognizance of special legal cases, we never find him refusing to deliver judgment upon a general point of law. But he went still deeper, and undertook a work yet more radical than that of Moses. Not only did he boldly announce that the work on Sinai was to be done over again by himself, but even the earlier and primary work of the Invisible King done in Ur of the Chaldees, the Call which had brought the nation into existence, he declared himself commissioned to repeat in that proclamation, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." We have hitherto seen only the restoration of the ancient theocracy; but the restoration was no mere resumption of the old system at the point at which it had been left off, and in the original form, but a re-commencement of the whole history from the beginning; not a revival of the old covenant, but a new covenant, a new election, a new legislation, a new community.

In the early time there came a voice to Abraham which said, "Get thee out of thy kindred, and from thy country, and from thy father's house; and I will make of thee a great nation, and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." And now there was heard throughout Palestine a voice proclaiming, "There is no man that hath given up father, or mother, or house, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive a hundredfold more in this present life, and in the world to come life everlasting." The two calls resemble each other in sound; in substance and meaning they are exactly parallel. The object of both was to create a new society, which should stand in a new relation to God, and which should have a legislation different from and higher than that which springs

up in secular states. And from both such a society sprang up ; from the first the ancient Jewish theocracy, from the second the Christian church.

It is not now so hard to understand Christ's royal pretensions. He declined, it is true, to command armies, to preside in law courts ; but higher works, such as imply equal control over the wills of men, the very works for which the nation chiefly hymned their Jehovah, he undertook in his name to do. He undertook to be the father of an everlasting state, and the legislator of a world-wide society.

But this is not all. Christ was more than a new Moses and a new Abraham. While the doctrine of immortality lay concealed in the background, and the necessary sanctions of law were temporal, they were wanting in that which would subsequently be found most influential. Christ brought life and immortality to light, and the throne of judgment is now placed in that mysterious region which had become visible to men on the other side of death. And thus, though Christ declined the office of civil judge, it does not follow that he declined all judicial functions. Of the judgments of Jehovah, those pronounced by the magistrate formed but a small part. In declining them, Christ took all the others—the diviner judgments—into his own hands. Though carefully abstaining from the functions of the civil magistrate, he was yet continually engaged in pronouncing judgment upon men. Some he assured of the forgiveness of sins, upon others he pronounced a severe sentence ; but in all cases he did so in a style which plainly showed that he considered the ultimate and highest decision upon men's deeds to be in his hands. Christ, then, in describing himself as a king, and at the same time as king of the kingdom of God—in other words, as a king representing the majesty of an Invisible King, of a theocracy—claimed the character, first, of Founder ; next, of Legislator ; thirdly, in a certain high and peculiar sense, of Judge, of a new divine society.

In Chapter V., the author considers Christ's credentials. In contemplating the scheme he proposes, three things strike us with astonishment. First, its prodigious originality. What other has had the courage or elevation of mind to say, I will build up a state by the mere force of my will, without help from the kingdoms of the world, without taking advantage of any of the secondary causes which unite men together, and I will make laws for my State which shall never be repealed ? Secondly, the calm confidence with which the scheme was carried out. He did not work his way to royalty, but simply stated to all men, 'I am your king.' Thirdly, we are astonished at the prodigious success of it. It is no more certain that Christ presented himself as the founder, legislator, and judge of a divine society, than it is certain

that men have accepted him in this character, that the divine society has been founded, that it has lasted nearly 2,000 years, that it has extended over a large and the most highly civilized portion of the earth's surface, and that it continues full of vigour at the present day.

Our author then touches the subject of miracles briefly, but admirably, and shows that by itself supernatural power would not have procured for Christ the kind of ascendancy which he wanted, but exactly that which he so decidedly rejected. The powers freely used were calculated to hinder his plan almost more than to further it. He therefore imposes on himself out of love a strict restraint, and men were free to discuss the claims of this king, whose royal pretensions were so pre-eminent, but who had an unlimited patience, and would endure the keenest criticism and most malignant personal attacks. This temperance in the use of supernatural power is the master-piece of Christ—a moral miracle superinduced upon the physical. This repose in greatness makes him the most sublime image ever offered to the human imagination, and gave him hence a great ascendancy. It was the combination of greatness and self-sacrifice which won men's hearts, the mighty powers held under mighty control, the inconceivable condescension of the cross of Christ. By this was the enthusiasm of a Paul kindled. His plan had the effect of not simply securing obedience, but of exciting enthusiasm and devotion. He laid men under an immense obligation. Witnessing his sufferings, and convinced by the miracles they saw him work that they were voluntarily endured, men's hearts were touched; and pity for weakness blending strangely with wondering admiration of unlimited power, an agitation of gratitude, sympathy, and astonishment, such as nothing else could ever excite, sprang up within them; and when, turning from his deeds to his words, they found this self-denial which had guided his own life prescribed as the principle which should guide others, gratitude broke forth in joyful obedience, self-denial produced self-denial, and the law and the lawgiver altogether were enshrined in their inmost hearts in inseparable veneration.

Chapter VI. is entitled "Christ's Winnowing Fan," and the author proceeds to dwell on the nature of the divine call which the first Christians received, and wherein it differed from that addressed to Abraham. It did not, for instance, sever them from the civil society to which they belonged, nor remove them from under its laws. Christ had to choose between declaring open war against the secular societies in the midst of which he would establish his community, or refraining from adopting methods which no secular governor would tolerate, such as judicial tribunals and penal administration of its own. And thus the first

distinguishing characteristic of the society to which Christ called men is, that it is a society whose rules were enforced by no secular punishments; but in relinquishing these Christ retained for his society the supernatural ones, and these were found sufficiently mighty. The members, besides acknowledging the authority of the civil ruler, acknowledged the authority of Christ, and stood in awe of him whom they regarded as representing the judicial majesty of Jehovah in the invisible world.

Another distinction is found in the objects of the Call. Not one man, but all men. The earlier was rigidly exclusive; the latter infinitely comprehensive. Yet John had represented Christ as especially bearing a winnowing fan, which at first we do not see, perhaps. Yet on closer examination it will be found that Christ did perform the work of discrimination in a very remarkable manner. The ordinary theory of morals—the winnowing-fan of society—did not satisfy him. He was persuaded that it winnowed away much that was valuable, and he occupied himself with rescuing the outcasts who had been hastily rejected; much, on the other hand, that society stored up in its garner, he vehemently pronounced to be chaff. He repelled no one on account of his past life. Publicans and harlots were freely called into his society, together with men of blameless lives. No one was excluded who did but choose to enter. Yet a winnowing was accomplished. How, then? The Call itself was the fan he bore in his hand. The Call itself sifted his followers, for it was to follow him that they were called. Christ demanded followers—recruits for the great work he had in hand—subjects for the king he announced himself to be. They must be prepared to change all their prospects, and to adopt a new mode of life. His call imposed on men the necessity of making a great resolution—of sacrificing a good deal. Without excluding any, he suffered the unworthy to exclude themselves. He kept them aloof only by offering nothing which they could find attractive, and all who found Christ's call attractive were such as were worthy to receive it. An appeal had been made to what was noblest in each; each had been summoned to shake off routine and convention; some were gathering strength to accomplish the feat—some abandoned the attempt in despair. According to the issue of the conflict, each man's worthiness would appear. This, then, was the winnowing Christ did. The Call itself was in his hand as a fan.

What then shall we call that quality which carried some through this ordeal, a goodness which conquers conventions, and unselfishly ranges itself on the right side in this crisis, when good and evil are most visibly opposed to each other? The first Christians manifestly needed a word, and one came into use, a permanent addition to the moral vocabulary of the world. This

word was faith. It was not altogether new, but it had never before been so important or so expressive of the real worth of a man. Rejecting the tests of society, Christ substituted this. It is the virtue required of one who wishes to be a Christian. To those who lack faith Christ will not be legislator or king. He does not dismiss them. He suffers them to abandon a society which soon ceases to have any attraction for them. The new test will be found the only one which could answer Christ's purpose of excluding all hollow disciples, and including all, however rude and vicious, who were capable of better things. For we want a test which shall admit all who have it in them to be good, whether their good qualities be trained or not. Such a test is found in faith. He who when goodness is impressively put before him exhibits an instinctive loyalty to it, starts forward to take its side, trusts himself to it, such a man has faith, and the root of the matter is in such a man. He may have habits of vice, but the loyal and faithful instinct in him will place him above many that practise virtue. He may be rude in thought and character, but he will unconsciously gravitate towards what is right. The most neglected and ungifted of men may make a beginning with faith. In half-brutal countenances faith will light up a glimmer of nobleness.

Chapter VII. is devoted to Conditions of Membership in Christ's Kingdom. What makes a Christian? Most of the answers in the present day involve a more or less elaborate creed, a correct theology, which would exclude even the first followers of Christ. We have to fall back upon that rudimental goodness which Christ calls faith; not blameless observance, or faultless belief, which may be and yet may not have sprung from genuine goodness, but from cleverness, or natural causes, or long-sighted selfishness. So that in the heart of the strictest theologian and moralist there may be no spark of faith. For such a moralist Christ has no mercy, and so it became a maxim in the Christian church that faith justifies without the deeds of the law. This virtue was to be taken by Christ, and trained by his legislation and teaching into something far riper and higher. But if the training should through untoward circumstances almost entirely fail, and faith remain a scarcely developed principle, bearing fruit but seldom and fitfully in action—*never* is inconceivable—still in the Christian view it is life to the soul; and the faithful soul, however undeveloped, is at home within the illuminated circle, and not in the outer darkness.

Chapter VIII. is on Baptism. Into this new society some initiatory rite was necessary; some public formality in which the new volunteer might take, as it were, the military oath, and confess his chief. If such a ceremony could be devised which

should at the same time indicate that the new votary had taken upon himself not simply a new service, but an entirely new mode of life, it would be so much the better. Christ adopted the rite of baptism, and made it absolutely binding upon all his followers to submit to it.

The Call having been thus discussed, the First Part of the volume concludes with a Chapter (IX.) of Reflections on the Nature of Christ's Society.

What was the ultimate object of Christ's scheme? When the Divine society was established and organized, what did he expect it to accomplish? We may suppose he would have answered, "The object of the Divine society is that God's will may be done on earth as it is in heaven." In the language of our own day, we may say, provided we use it with sufficient insight and depth of meaning, its object was the improvement of morality. No strange or unusual object. Many schemes have been proposed for curing human nature of its vice, and helping it to right thought and right action. One large class of schemes may, for the sake of comparison with Christianity, be treated as one; for since the time of Sokrates philosophy has occupied itself with the same problem, and we may gain some insight into Christ's method of curing human nature, by comparing it with that of the philosophers. Similar as on the surface they may seem, the difference is radical. Many have compared Christ and Sokrates. Our author shows the contrast. The philosophers, if they constituted a society, did so for convenience only in giving instruction, and assumed a name derived from the wisdom they professed. Christ took his title from the community he ruled, and called himself King. Sokrates based everything on argument, and studied to sink his own personality, professing to know nothing, because he wished to exalt his method at his own expense. He wanted to give men, not truths, but power to arrive at truths, and persistently abstained from all dogmatic assertion. But we find Christ at the very opposite extreme. With Sokrates argument is everything, and personal authority nothing. With Christ personal authority is all in all, and argument altogether unemployed. Sokrates depreciates himself and dissembles his own superiority. Christ perpetually and consistently exalts himself and steadfastly asserts his own absolute superiority to all men, and his natural title to universal royalty. The same contrast appears in the requirements they made on their followers. Sokrates cared nothing what those whom he conversed with thought of him, and would bear any kind of rudeness from them; but he cared very much about the subject of discussion and to obtain the triumph for his method. On the other hand, the one thing which Christ required was a certain personal attachment to himself, a

fidelity or loyalty, and so long as they manifested this he was in no haste to deliver their minds from speculative error. Christ had a totally different object, and used totally different means from Sokrates. The resemblance is, no doubt, at first sight, striking. Both were teachers, both were prodigiously influential, both suffered martyrdom. But if we examine these points of resemblance we shall see that martyrdom was, as it were, an accident of the life of Sokrates, and teaching in a great degree of Christ's, and that their influence upon men has been of a totally different kind—that of Sokrates being an intellectual influence on thought; that of Christ a personal influence upon feeling. What real student of Sokrates concerns himself with his martyrdom? It is an impressive page of history, but the importance of Sokrates to man is not affected by it. Had he died in his bed he would still have been the creator of science. On the other hand, if we isolate Christ's teaching from his life, we may come to the conclusion that it contains little that could not be found elsewhere, and found accompanied with reasoning and explanation. Those who fix their eyes on the Sermon on the Mount, or rather on the naked propositions which it contains, and disregard Christ's life, his cross, and his resurrection, commit the same mistake in studying Christianity that the student of Sokratic philosophy would commit if he studied only the romantic story of his death. Both Sokrates and Christ uttered remarkable thoughts, and lived remarkable lives; but Sokrates holds his place in history by his thoughts, and not by his life; Christ by his life, and not by his thoughts.

Philosophy hopes to cure the vices of human nature by working upon the head, Christianity by educating the heart. Christianity and moral philosophy are totally different things then, and have different functions. Both endeavour to lead men to do what is right; but philosophy undertakes to explain what it is right to do, while Christianity undertakes to make men disposed to do it. It is not so much the knowledge of what is right that is needed, as something that shall be able to evoke good impulses and cherish them, and make them masters of the bad ones. This Christ does. A first step is to form a strong personal attachment, to be drawn out of one's self, the object of attachment being a person of striking and conspicuous goodness. The worship of such a person will be the best exercise in virtue that he could have. Let him vow obedience in life and death to such a person, let him mix and live with others who have made the same vow, he will ever have before his eyes an ideal of what he may himself become. His heart will be saturated by new feelings. A new world will be gradually unveiled to him, and more than this, a new self within his old self will make its

presence felt, and a change will pass over him, which he will feel it most proper to call a new birth. This is Christ's scheme stated in its most naked form.

Philosophy has no instrument that it can use to secure the end. There exists no other such instrument, but that personal one of which Christ availed himself; and if we examine the best product of philosophy, do we find the result satisfactory? If he does right, is it not without warmth and promptitude? And no wonder. The principle of sympathy is feeble. Men become for the most part pure, generous, and humane, not by logical but by personal influences. Of these two things, that of reason and that of living example, which would a wise reformer re-enforce? Christ chose the last. He gathered all men to a common relation to himself, and demanded that each should set him on the pedestal of his heart, giving a lower place to all other objects of worship—to father and mother, to husband and wife. In Him should the loyalty of all hearts centre; He should be their pattern, their authority, their judge. Of Him and His service should no man be ashamed; but to those who acknowledged it, morality should be an easy yoke, and the law of right as spontaneous as the law of life; sufferings should be easy to bear, and the loss of worldly friends repaired by a new home in the bosom of the Christian kingdom; finally, in death itself their sleep should be sweet, upon whose tombstones it could be written, "Obdormivit in Christo."

The author dwells on the fact of personal influence in creating virtuous impulses, and illustrates the magical passing of virtue out of a virtuous man into the hearts of those with whom he comes in contact by the story of the woman taken in adultery, which we gave in last number, and which concludes the First Part of the book. The Second Part, on Christ's Legislation, contains fourteen chapters, but we have already used all our available space in this abstract of the First Part. Imperfect and unsatisfactory as such an abstract must be, it may nevertheless help to give some idea of a very thoughtful and remarkable book; which the Earl of Shaftesbury, we find, the other day, at a meeting of the Church Pastoral Aid Society, characterized as "the most pestilential book ever vomited, I think, from the jaws of hell." Lord Shaftesbury is, of course, entitled to his own opinion.

THE HAPPINESS OF JESUS CHRIST.

“These things have I spoken to you that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.”—JOHN XV.

THE object of the immense sum of Christian teaching and preaching that is going forward around the world is the production of eternal joy; for, in the words inscribed at the head of this paper, Jesus Christ Himself declared that such was the aim he proposed to himself in his Gospel. We might translate the motto into modern English propositions in some such manner as this: first, that Jesus Christ himself is exceedingly happy, with a kind and measure of happiness unknown to the generality of men; and, second, that it is the end of the Incarnation to communicate the same kind of happiness to mankind for ever.

And this offer of service is peculiar to Jesus of Nazareth. I do not recollect any other acknowledged leader who distinctly offers to make his followers exceedingly happy. How strangely, nevertheless, such a proposal would sound in the ears of any mixed and busy assembly of modern men. Imagine that Jesus Christ, just as he appeared among his contemporaries, with a countenance like a window into heaven, translucent to the light within, but in all other respects clothed as an ordinary mortal, could stand on the front steps of the Royal Exchange in London, and with a loud voice call upon the traffickers and merchants and passers by “to come to Him,” because He would make them “full of joy” for ever; what would be his reception? One can conceive the expression of most of the countenances of the persons hurrying along to arrange an immediate purchase of shares, or to receive payment for a parcel of goods, or to agree upon a price for freight, or to send an order by telegraph to Lancashire or Yorkshire for cloths or cottons, or to Lyons for silks, or to Birmingham for hardware—an expression indicating the somewhat angry feeling that such a dreamer should be permitted by the supervisors of the traffic to interfere with practical business, or to distract the streets with such insane outcries as this offer of happiness to mankind. The feeling would be, in the majority, that they knew how to take care of their own happiness, so far as happiness was attainable on earth.

Certainly not much of it was to be gained, for life is subject to infinite vexations and annoyances; there are troubles enough, no doubt, and there is that detestable Shadow of Death at the end of the prospect,—and GOD, perhaps, beyond that, with whom some sort of “peace” must be “made” before they die; but meantime the way to be happy is to make money, for money will buy all the solid comforts of life, all that has any reality in it; and any pretence to another sort of happiness, such as probably this dreamer proposes—an intellectual or moral happiness—that is nothing better than enthusiasm, for it is well known that religion, so far from conferring happiness, when it does not find a man gloomy and splenetic, generally makes him so. “Onward”—then, such men would say in effect to the crowd brought to a stand for a moment by the great uplifted Voice and wondrous Eyes that flashed with the everlasting light,—“Onward, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.”—So much for the general belief in the motto on the pediment of the Royal Exchange—**“THE EARTH IS THE LORD’S, AND THE FULNESS THEREOF.”**

Yet amidst the crowd of busy traffickers would probably be found some on whose hearts a deeper and different impression would be made; who would begin to think and muse, as they listened and passed along, on that question of Happiness, deep, vital, and enduring; and who would confess to themselves that it was a matter deserving of the serious attention even of a modern Englishman. Some such train of thought as this might occur (for among these myriads of busy people who throng the pathways of our great cities, there are not a few who have trains of thought passing through their minds which would be worthy of being uttered aloud to all the persons traversing at the moment even the most crowded thoroughfare, from end to end):—“Well, as I look upon these hard and anxious faces that hurry along by tens of thousands, it is strange to notice how very rarely occurs one that is distinguished from the rest by looking exceedingly happy. Now and then passes a face that indicates a supreme spiritual repose within, and now and then a youthful countenance that is illumined by the gladness of youth; but the expression of the great majority is far from satisfied. When one looks upon or listens to the voices of a thousand birds, and then of a thousand of mankind, the contrast is great indeed. The birds are cheerful up to the extent of their ability, the lark sings even in a cage; but these human creatures seem borne down by outward or by inward cares. Many appear to be bearing through life a burden of anxiety as to their outward concerns, which bends them to the earth. Others, whose apparel indicates prosperity, seem full of sorrow in the expression of the eyes, where chiefly the soul is seen, as if

painful thoughts consumed them. Certainly to encounter a very happy face, a visage radiant and beautiful, not with mere outward jollity, or with the excitement of stimulants, but with a calm delight and joy radiating from within, from the mind and soul, is a rare occurrence. Such a visage, noticeably of intense and joyful aspect, would draw instant attention from its singularity. Everyone would look up as that countenance passed along, as much surprised as if at night they suddenly beheld a meteor with a train of gold and purple light travelling through the sky. How is this? Why is it that we all seem to pitch our estimate of the possibilities of happiness so low, and press forward in life as if the grand object were to lose the sense of present trouble in a future, of which the anticipation may serve to divert attention from the heartache which poisons the passing hour. Is nothing higher than this possible? It may be there is something in the offer made to the crowd by the Wonderful Person who stood at the gates of the Exchange, and proclaimed that he held in his hand the keys of the gates of Heaven."

Perhaps again another passenger, who had heard the unwonted interruption on the business of the hurrying crowd of haughty modern men—a man who had some thoughts in him beyond those of wool, or cotton, or timber, who had devoted some attention to Nature, and knew a little of the living creatures who cover the globe, in the air, in the water, on the dry land, in multitudes so overwhelming to the imagination—a man of business who was fond of natural history, and whose evenings were dedicated to some refining and scientific pursuit,—such an one might begin to think, as he walked towards the West, somewhat in this fashion—"Well, it does appear as if life was created for the sake of happiness, even if it be a happiness that must be reached through sorrow—and surely, according to the quality and refinement of the life, ought to be the depth and spirituality of its joy. Here is an immense ascending scale of animated beings. At the base there are zoophytes; it is doubtful where conscious sensation begins; but wherever the point is found, there begins pleasure and not pain. The animal races all appear to be happy according to their lights and powers. The deep sea is full of happy creatures,—from the 'leviathan who plays therein,' and spouts aloft his water-columns in the breeze, then plunges headlong downward into the abyss of eternal night,—to the shrimps who leap and toss by myriads upon the sunny shore. The atmosphere is full of happy creatures,—from the eagle who ascends like an angel on outspread wings to the blazing sun, and the albatross who floats in serene majesty on the upper realms of air, down through the countless tribes endowed with song or

resplendent with plumage, to the humming-birds, the fire-flies and the ephemera, who dance away their little day of life beneath the summer sky. The dry land again teems with creatures who are happy according to their capacities—the wild beasts who roam and hunt their prey through the wilderness, the cattle on a thousand hills, with all the millions of millions who, under their different species, haunt the polar, the temperate, and the torrid zone. There seems no afterthought of sorrow, there is mind enough for the purposes of their existence, but not enough to embitter it by reflection on the past and the future. Some of them appear to be supremely happy, especially the birds, whose wonderful voices in spring, by day or by night, whether the chorus be led by the lark or by the nightingale, breathe forth the very soul of joy. It is the great human race alone who are not so joyful, whose spirits have sunk so low, who are so full of gloom, and who are so often ‘in an agony.’ What can be the meaning of all this? Obviously man has a capacity for happiness, a nature so delicately strung, so ‘fearfully and wonderfully made,’ that the enjoyment or suffering of animals seems hardly worthy to be compared with the exalted joy or fathomless woe that can be revealed in us. Here are senses of eyesight and hearing that are alive to all the world of colour and of sound, and can be trained into the most acute sensibility of enjoyment by the practice of the arts of painting and of song. The very senses of touch, of taste, of smell, seem to be constructed in man of a more exquisite delicacy. Here are inward faculties of observation, of memory, of reasoning, of imagination, of affection, of will, which qualify man to live all the day long in a spiritual world of divine enjoyment, and to lead an inner life akin to that of heaven itself. And here, deeper than all, at the very centre of his being, are the moral powers, those awful endowments which, more than any other, determine whether man’s life shall be one of joy or sorrow, of gladness or of gloom. Here is Conscience with its peculiar pleasures and pains, a divine oracle within the breast, a veritable Urim and Thummim, whose voice of approval is the chief joy of life, whose voice of condemnation we may stifle but cannot wholly still, whose voice we may render indistinct and half inaudible by imprisonment in dark recesses and under the deep accumulations of a sinful history, but which still speaks out of the ground, and persists to the last in accents of thunder, which gather fresh terror as we approach the grave, in proclaiming, with the Apocalypse, that ‘dogs and sorcerers and whoremongers shall not inherit the kingdom of God,’ and that ‘whosoever loveth and maketh a lie shall be cast into the lake of fire.’—Well, here is this wonderful assemblage of faculties, of sensibilities, of emotions, of capacities in every

man, resulting in what issue to the generality?—in the production certainly of a vast amount of pleasure, since powers originally made for happiness cannot suddenly be rendered wholly wretched; but pleasure, chiefly of a 'sinful' sort, that is derived too exclusively from the senses, a pleasure, therefore, much broken by deeper feelings of unrest, dulled by excess, or crossed by vexations,—in a vast sum of indifference and stupor produced by reaction from licentious indulgence, by sloth, or by the use of anodynes and narcotics,—and, finally, in an untold sum of positive and intense wretchedness, heart-ache,—and melancholy from pole to pole.

"And there is nothing more remarkable in the whole scene of human life than the apparent indifference felt by most as to any improvement of the case, as to plans for attaining a higher rate of happiness, happiness of a more refined and durable quality; so that while you could enchain the attention of any audience by explaining to them how they could command a higher rate of interest, or a higher rate of wages, or an increase in the returns of their business or profession, the generality of men feel *bored* with even the shortest discussion on a project for becoming 'full of joy for evermore.' This is because mortification is set in, men are 'past feeling,' and have come to this, that having forsaken the Fountain of Living Waters, they can no longer endure even to hear with patience of the Rivers of Paradise proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb."

Such reflections as these might perhaps prompt the two passengers to return to the point where Jesus had taken his stand, with the ancient question, "Master, where dwellest thou?" To which, doubtless, the old answer would be returned, "Come and see." And they would go away to see in his home, and to study more closely, a person possessed of the true human happiness, the happiness proper to a man,—that which places him in harmony with all the rest of creation, and with its invisible Author, "the Happy God." The lesson which these inquirers would learn from Jesus Christ would be that man's happiness depends on the synthesis of two worlds—the seen and the unseen—with which the two parts of his nature stand in eternal relation, his body and his spirit; and that it is as impossible for man to be happy apart from God, as for an animal made for the air, the water, or the land, to enjoy life out of its own element. God made man in his own image. He cannot, therefore, be rendered happy merely with the enjoyment of an animal. Hence that vague craving after something more than they already possess, even in the hearts of the wealthiest—that vast discontent with what is already in store—that deep-seated yearning after something which can give not only pleasure but

peace, not only a momentary excitement but enduring repose. And this is the fulness of Joy which Christ both possesses and confers. He himself is happy, in conformity to the eternal laws of being, and he will teach the grand lesson to mankind.

He was himself "full of joy." He was no doubt happy as a child. Much quiet enjoyment falls to the lot of infancy and childhood, even as things are now. The mind is not racked with anxieties, or tormented by the conscience of sins. Hence the senses enjoy more deeply, and the fancy, like the sun, throws its thousand rainbow-tints over the stream of life as it breaks in a cataract at our feet. One never sees children at play without thinking how plentifully heaven supplies them with amusement. They need not to "go to the play." Their theatre is always open—their drama is always in progress before their eyes, for everything is dramatic to them. "All the world's a stage," and heaven and earth to them are already "new." But Christ's childhood must have been supremely joyful. "Trailing clouds of glory did He come from God, who was His home." "Heaven lay about Him in His infancy." The spotless Lamb, the radiant Rose of Sharon, must have passed some blissful years among the fields and hills of Nazareth. As He grew up there were present with Him none of the causes which so often embitter youth, and shroud the soul in a cloud of melancholy—none of the tempers and none of the vices which so often canker existence and blot out the sun, until the soul becomes a sort of scorpion in the breast, ever ready to strike and sting, itself most wretched, and spreading its own dark shadow upon all around. Then came His manhood. Every power in perfect order, the senses clear and strong, as only those are clear and strong which are the organs of a spirit at perfect rest within,—His eyes were bright with innocency, His ear "attent" to every voice of God, His sense of beauty pure and fresh in more than virgin chastity of soul; each flower was arrayed to him in "glory" greater than Solomon's; his intellect alert and buoyant as the chariot of the cherubim; everything seemed interesting upon which He looked—the birds, the sky, the lilies, the works of God above and below. His speech represented the immense calm within his soul; His very presence stilled the storm and charmed the winds and waves to rest. The very birds and fishes recognized his power. It must have seemed as if the flowers looked brighter through their thousand eyes as He passed along. His purity of soul raised every meal to the dignity of a sacrament—every ablution into the symbol of a divine pardon. But his chief happiness arose from what He was to others who needed his help, from his perpetual self-offering upon the altar of the world. It was his "meat and drink" to teach dark souls to

see—to associate patiently beneath that burning sky with the hot crowds of struggling peasantry, who brought forth their sick to be healed on “beds and couches,”—to toil over unnumbered leagues of burning sand and rock to reach the obscure mountain villages of Palestine where souls were to be awakened by Truth, the “trump of God,”—to dry the tears of the widow, and of the poor mother whose little daughter lay cold and dead,—to fill whole regions with gladness because all their sick were cured by a word,—to exalt a Simon into a Peter, a coarse and blasphemous fisherman of Galilee into a seraphic apostle,—to give his breast as a pillow to a soul that loved the divine mysteries,—to unfold heaven’s own delights—“the better part”—to the sweet soul who sat at his feet and gazed up, awe-struck, unto his God-revealing countenance,—to offer Himself at last a sacrifice for the sins of the world,—to express that “greater love” which knows how to give up life itself for its object,—this was the happiness of Jesus Christ. He felt strong in the embrace of the Everlasting Arms; he knew that he pleased God, and lived on a plan which was worthy of prolongation to eternity. His pleasures were not like passing gales, but like the steady breathings of the Almighty, who is “alive for evermore.” The face of Memnon in the desert was fixed towards the blushing orient, and every morning the beams of the day-spring drew forth music from the stone, so travellers fabled; but here was a countenance steadfastly fixed to ascend to the Jerusalem above—fixed towards the eternal Sunrising, and the beams of the Divine glory broke in music at His approach. The very expression of His face revealed the reality of the eternity towards which He travelled as to his perpetual home. His features already shone with the reflected radiance of the sun-lit city to which he should soon “go up.” There was no earthly element in His joy. Outwardly there were abundant causes of sorrow. He was acquainted with grief. The storm of evil beat upon and stained His brow with its biting blast; its lightnings marred his visage more than any man’s; his spirit sometimes chafed and sometimes sank under the suffering caused by the perpetual neighbourhood of grossness, stupidity, fraud, and blasphemous profanity; but the “Man of Sorrows” possessed a joy too deep for tears to destroy. His was the inward well-spring of Divine delight. If darkness gathered around the mountain basis, eternal sunlight settled on its crown. He rose above this region of cares and trifles into the infinite realms of God, and inhaled a joy which death itself could not extinguish; for with his last breath he spake of “Paradise,” and commended his spirit into the hands of Everlasting Love.

Such was the “joy” of Jesus Christ, and such is the joy

which he designs to bestow for ever on each of His disciples. And the depth and quality of each man's daily happiness now is the best indication of his prospect of being "for ever with the Lord."

F. W.

THE KEY OF THE KINGDOM.

WHATEVER commands ingress or exit anywhere, in the world of matter or of mind, is a key. Thus there is a key of a country, harbour, instrument, military position, policy, language, science, &c. There is a key to everything, and everything opens to him who has the key. How then should it be matter of wonder or perplexity that Jesus Christ, in forming the first missionary band for the conversion of the world, should have specified this very test, when to Peter, and afterwards to the other disciples, He signified the work to be done under that conspicuous symbol of power, the key to the kingdom of heaven? Skilfully and deceptively has the Romish Church, loving images, seized on this most striking one. In apologue, engraving, or picture, who has not seen its favourite apostle standing at the gate, deciding who should go in or must stay out? What an important part the figure with the keys, ecclesiastically propagated, and never without some apology for a descendant, has played in her schemes, and in that of *pseudo*-papacies! We believe in no such design of the Founder of Christianity to appoint *pseudo* guards for His Church. We hold as illegitimate that splendid proxy for the poor fishermen, who has so long given his absolute sentence and casting-vote among the seven hills to decide the empire of the world. Still the old type of power bespeaks its true interpretation, nay entreats a universal application at the world's hands. It is questionable whether poetry or parable, is equal to produce another emblem of the Church's office and function so just and comprehensive as the key. The reason of this is obvious. We account our souls as chambers, both deep and inaccessible save to those whom we suffer to come in. If any one has an experience like to and deeper than ours; if he have thought, aspired, felt, and suffered in the same direction, with a force and vividness that put our vitality to shame, he

has the key to our bosom; all our secrets are at his mercy; he has only, as in the familiar story with the password, "Open, Sesame!" to touch the spring, and all the folding-doors of the heart, tight as we may have shut them, expand under his finger, like city-gates to a triumphal conqueror. What then, it may be asked, is that key by our possession and effectual handling of which alone we can vindicate our connection with God's Church on earth? This is the question, a question too which suggests that there may be dangers to which the Protestant Church may be exposed, of mistaking the key quite as seriously, if not as absurdly, as Rome. It is a matter of life and death to note these mistakes, for their longer continuance will seriously injure, and certainly retard, the progress of true religion in the church and world. Following the example and practice of the scholastics of the middle ages we propose to show what the key is not, before affirming what it is.

In an age of sharp and decisive criticism, of keen controversial acumen, when intellectual greatness is recognized before goodness, it is not strange that many should have assumed the key to be *criticism*. The ability to show that other believers are wrong will never lift up for the critics or the criticised, those everlasting doors to let the "King of Glory" in. We do not advocate any disallowing of criticism. It is indispensable, and has a province and use by no means unimportant or despicable. To detect and eliminate error, to try in a hotter than chemist's fire the strange mixture that would pass for truth, and separate the most fine gold; to watch at our post against the intrusion of error and heresy, and to own and to honour those falsely stigmatized as heretics, as perhaps the best believers; to clear away the rubbish from the avenues, and mark the pilgrim's path, may be, nay is, the function of criticism; but it is not to open or occupy the kingdom of heaven. Religious editors, writers, and teachers are not unfrequently, and certainly not unfairly, regarded as by way of excess, critical, and whether, consciously or not, they often appear to justify the current opinion. The whole body of Dissenters are critics of the Established Church. The Independents, Baptists, Wesleyans—all the comers-out from a State Church—the cream of dissent, have performed what may be called a critical work—not yet finished. Doubtless such was, and may be still, necessary; but showing other denominations to be at fault doctrinally or ecclesiastically is not the key to the Kingdom of Heaven. The themes for criticism to handle are the most numerous and momentous;—documents of the faith, authorships, tongues, translations, history of the Church, creeds, enlightenings and sophistications of philosophy; yet it is inadequate to open the hearts of men, because it is altogether but a preliminary and an

inferior development of our proper religious nature: and in certain circles we have already relatively too much criticism. Everything is criticised—even God himself. Reasoning is the definition of something, the opposite of which may be equally well defined and stated; and it is a diseased mind whose chief attitude or instinctive tendency is to find faults, pick flaws, and throw stones. Never will the ear of man or the heart of the world be reached by criticism. Not only is criticism an inferior, but it is altogether a negative action of the understanding. The negative understanding of man can never attain unto faith. Separately, and in its own virtue alone, the understanding is not a believer. The negative is a healthy brace for the positive, but the negative intellect is an infidel. Goethe, who has painted the most real and veritable devil that any artist has given us, with profound discernment makes him to be “*a denying spirit!*” The Psalmist warns us not to fret, even because of the wicked; and to dispute and wrangle all our time against error and errorists is an unfruitful bestowment of our editorial and ministerial functions. Criticism is a club, a pruning knife, an axe to clear the forest and fell trees that are in the way, or a fire to burn the baser growth and underbush, but it is not the key. The mere mention of some names will at once reveal the distance between the critic and the Christian—Strauss and St. Paul.

But there are finer keys, which are supposed to be able to open, but they cannot unfasten the wondrous lock, or make the door of the kingdom give way. The *yea* of criticism is science. The affirmation of divine things is theology. But we need not insist upon it, that this noblest of sciences, whose matchless mission is to tell God's truth to man, how little it possesses the mind of the world, and how the dissensions and discussions of its professors have wearied into sickness the hearts of the thoughtful and earnest. To a large extent it is painfully true that natural science, and not theology, interests the young intelligence of this country. Not a few minds who belong to, or would naturally fall within the domain of religion, are trying to substitute science for religion: trying to make science the key. It cannot succeed or answer; it is a key to the kingdom of nature; but the kingdom of nature and heaven are not, to any ordinary conception, the same. Advocating and admitting no theory which opposes them to each other, declaring their real inseparableness and mutual pervasion, yet according to no common opinion ever formed of them do they change places, or are of equal value. The human mind, in accordance with the powers it puts forth, has the choice to be in the one or the other. In the possible but rare ecstasy that lifts and melts clearly together all its manifold capa-

bilities, an individual mind may be in both at once. But with the majority, a million to one, the practical limits of human faculty or voluntary attention make science only the outer court of the temple; and how plain is it that many prefer to stay in the vestibule, and do not go into the sanctuary! Now, as of old, do we speak of philosophy as a *porch*, each school having its own entry or ante-room where it lives, caring not to sit in the inner chamber, or to kneel with bare head and worship under the glorious dome of the building! What a large portion, not only of the general crowd of students and neophytes in learning, but of the most eminent names in various departments, are incurious of the great—that greatest problem of our relation to the Infinite, and who even protest against the introduction into scientific generalizations and deductions of any religious considerations as an incongruity, nay, an apostasy from science, and who would abolish all religious mention of cause and effect out of their societies! A man of unsurpassed eminence in original research, whose name is associated with great intellectual and philosophical efforts, himself a noble exception to this melancholy condition of the philosophers of the age, remarked, when speaking of those able physical philosophers abroad, whose censure he was momentarily expecting for having presumed to find in the forms of nature thoughts of God, made for them this apology—that he did not think that they, after all, meant to resist the notion of Deity, but that they were so absorbed, as to drop down exhausted each in his own furrow, and so were indisposed to pursue any truth or track of investigation to its end, in homage of faith to the Most High! But, thank God, no sharply drawn line of any speciality of science is pre-requisite to this end! No minute abstrusity of microscopic examination commands the goal. Every stalk that grows in the field, every straw that lies on the threshing-floor, the wing of every bird, and every fin that oars the deep, help us just as well. The creeping, chirping, gliding, flashing myriad life that faces us in every walk answers, and is enough. “Science is religious—its union with religion is not optional, a thing to be attempted or avoided. It *is*.”* Still, in itself and studied of itself, it is not the key of the kingdom. There is a way of looking clearly, and after a fashion, thoroughly at the facts of nature, without even so much as touching the borders of that kingdom. It is to view those facts as the senses show them, superficially related to each other, and as calculation may disclose them, adapted to certain successive appearances and results, with a plea of ignorance that they have any beginning, purpose, or spiritual bond; and branding as sheer presumption

any pretence as to a knowledge of their cause. This is *Positive Science*, to which Comte, the French philosopher, has given a name, but which has many professors, and very many followers, who would not care openly to take the lead in such a bold and godless philosophy. Key to the kingdom of heaven indeed! On this ground there is *no* key to heaven at all. What need of a key without a door? The facts of nature need not be—nor is it according to the nature of the soul that they should be—contemplated in an isolated and mechanical manner. A man who should attempt a perfect exploration of the human frame by a survey purely of its cutaneous and muscular surfaces, having first carefully cut the nerves that lead to the battery, and which convey the wonderful, incomprehensible spiritual electricity of the brain, would succeed as well as those do who disown that creation has a commencement, spiritual cause, and Designer. There is another reason why science is not the key to the kingdom, and it is this: the kingdom of heaven is not a kingdom of *perceptions* only, high or low, but of sentiments, resolutions, faith, and actions. It is not simply admiring the will—the perfect, the beautiful will of God, as He goes forth in His power to give and to execute His own general orders throughout the universe. It is not admiration of God's power, but a conforming ourselves, our heart and will and life, in all moral diligence and patience, to His most particular pleasure concerning us, in our whole sphere and destiny; and this is a sanctity of aspiration, a sublimity of endeavour, a worth of attainment, a quickening of faith, that no science whatever can reach, however arduously pursued, and however perfectly mastered. This opinion does not invalidate science or make it vacate its own proper place. Instances of wisdom and goodness to suggest an original mind, and to be fuel for worship or material for a house of prayer, are plenty on every hand. Science, in fact, multiplies and discovers in them unsuspected abundance and startling novelty. But Science, furnishing the timber, is not the architect of the temple. Science is positive in what it works in and with—deserves to be well honoured with all costly instruments, ample conservatories, collegiate chairs, "Royal Societies," and to be thanked for its contributions to our language and illustrations to our ideas, and for all that it has done, whether in creating or awakening the multifarious hints and satisfactions and feelings of the soul. Willingly avowing that it can do a great deal, we cannot allow that Science can pierce the lock of the kingdom. To use Science as the key to the kingdom is to attempt to open a door with a wrong key; we may be strong, and the key may be good, but we are wrong, and the key is not the right one. And here too a comparison may not be ill-timed or inapt. The great names in

science are worthy of and receive much honour. But will the German Humboldt touch the human soul as long and as deeply as the German Luther? No, because not with science is the key to the kingdom. Such a man as La Place thought that he had exhausted all the virtues of science, yet that which pointed at a spiritual world, was to him no more than a painted door. "An undevout astronomer is mad!" It happens naturally enough to a thousand scientific men they are undevout, and *therefore* mad. To be undevout is to be an impious observer. Is there not evidence in every street of a God? Are the evidences of His love, wisdom, and power few in number, or insignificant and uncertain in their testimony? Has the ear grown deaf to the divine Word which has gone out to the ends of the world? or the hearts of men ceased to respond to His ever-quickenings presence? If the more striking manifestations of God's greatness and nearness do not arrest and excite the attention of men, then the very stones will cry out. To the scientific world the divine Being is speaking most plainly at this hour. Science has now her day. She celebrates her trophies; she is the pride of our land: and while honouring her for the meed of service which she has either voluntarily or unwittingly rendered to gospel truth, nevertheless let not the watchword, the cry of Science, be to catch and keep the ear of the sceptical. Let her not pretend to open the kingdom, or presume to preach the doctrines which the hearts of men require, and for which they pine. Science does not preach. The soul of man preaches through it as a mouthpiece. Deeper words than she can utter—than she can think, alone can penetrate and defend the safe that holds the chief treasure. At the under-pinning, and not at the portal, is her place. What Science does, its relative and positive value,—how it stirs up the intellect and engages the mental faculties,—what it confers of benefit,—what it confesses, denies, pulls down, builds up, and affirms, every thoughtful person knows. Its grand work *ought* to be to turn *doubt* and denial into certainty and reverence. The great Unknown and Infinite are the subjects which it can and may study. It has within it the innumerable and the immeasurable, and cannot be subdued by any despotism, or its life destroyed by any occurrence. It is the centre, and in many respects guards the circumference of civilization. Notwithstanding its precision, profound penetration, patient watching for phenomena, and its professed ardour for progress, science is the asymptote of truth. It has greatness however. Humanity without it would be as the child taking its first steps. A constant supply of light is what the world wants, and Science is that light. Knowledge is the sheaf of facts, Science is the gleaner. In view of this large admission in its favour, few do

not hesitate to place the highest welfare of man upon a scientific basis, and to argue a return to pure science, and nothing less or else. For reasons already adduced, and one still to be urged, we again reiterate that Science is not *the key to the kingdom*. The unexpected, the spiritual, and the extra-human, ought always to be expected, sought after, and studied by Science; yet for centuries she has been infidel, refusing to be respectful to facts beyond her ken, and laughing at spiritual theories and experiences. To laugh is easier than to learn, to mock than to be modest, to sneer than to submit to facts that are, or are alleged to be, above our knowledge. This has been precisely the temper of science. Its lifeless scepticism that mocked at spirit, and treated heaven as a cold abstraction, which robbed the soul alike of its faith here and a noble life hereafter, that smote down the miraculous in the past and the God-like of the present, is not now so shameless and defiant, but yet far from the kingdom. Science now kneels at Christ's feet, it is true, but it comes to Him by night: its confessions of Christ before men are not numerous, nor distinctly announced.

What, then, is the master-key which Science cannot wield? Is it genius? As the positive understanding is certainly a step above the negative, so genius does not so much tread as soar beyond all understanding. But she is no hierarch. She is the chief butler of the vessels that minister to a mortal intellectual hunger and thirst, but not the highest servant of the soul's wants. She carries not the key at her belt, nor under her wings. Like the scribe Jesus talked with, she is not far from the kingdom. She can suddenly transform and transfigure what is of earth, and fetch down her bright overshadowing cloud to us, so that we are made to wish for tabernacles to abide under, though neither Moses, nor Elias, nor Christ is there! The man of transcendent imagination, often non-repelling, yet consciously shuts out the supernal majesty. Shakespeare, whose matchless imagination was so completely under his control, that he could make of it light or lightning by turns, has, by a foremost modern critic and admirer, been accused of this very neglect of divinity, and turning the world to mere sport of fireworks. A recent writer has said that there is no genius without a *morale*. There may be inscrutable and possible senses in which this is true; but plainly looking at facts, we may say Byron was a genius, Burns was a man of genius, and Goethe was a genius. Racine and E. Poe were men of genius, but they had not the key of the kingdom. Genius aspires—rises higher than any earthly effort; goes up the mountain-top; enters into clouds; fills the air with its presence; resolves some of life's problems: in a word, does all that genius can do—that done, and the door of the kingdom

does not yield. In Homer, in Dante, in Wordsworth, in Tennyson, there is perhaps more than genius ;

“Up to the hills they lift their eyes.”

In height, if not in depth, they excel their brethren as they ascend Olympus. It is fair to ask, is the product of genius never mistaken, and taken for the key to the kingdom ? As from the bunch of keys hanging at the girdle of the soul one by one is tried in vain at the mysterious door, none seems so near succeeding as that labelled “Humanity.” The unfastenings seem almost to give way. But it is not entirely successful. Man must be accosted in a higher name than his own, before he can command the seat for which he was destined. The “*Humanitarians*,” whether of the Owen or Fourier school, may propose to build a sensual paradise, but their love for men, if merely human, will by opposition be inflamed and cankered by malignity ; not owning the Father in all His children, they will not hesitate to wrong some in righting others. To all humanity certainly let us cling ! It is our hope of deliverance from bondage. It is the romance of real life in a money-loving age and land. Imperfect as are its temper and instruments, it is the vision of better things without which the people would morally perish. Humanity will be the last, sweetest fruit on the tree of life, but from the root of divinity it must grow. Science is higher than criticism, genius than criticism, and humanity than them all ; but as an independent all-sufficient force, it is not the key to the kingdom. It breaks in the hand that would twist and drive it home to the opening of the door. Self-culture is not the key either. It is a key to success, to social honour, to fashion, and the parliament, but not to the kingdom of heaven. If anything is plain from the pages of Scripture, it is this—that what we let God do for us, and not what we do for ourselves alone, can naturalize us as citizens of His realm.

The Key is that simplest and sublimest of all experiences—that calmest, holiest, and deepest of all spiritual movements in the soul—faith in and consciousness of God, arising from a capacity in our moral constitution as real and legitimate as understanding, imagination, and social affection, while in its function above their range. Whoever has this faith in himself, and can speak to it in others, holds the key. Pope, priest, cardinal, technical “Father in God,” or peasant, has no exclusive installation or stewardship. We give no prominence to any doctrinal peculiarity ; that may be dispensed with here. The faith which seeks after and finds the living God, that rises to Him through storm within and without, through gorges and walls of water—that faith has the key that opens things on earth and in heaven, and what-

soever it binds is bound, and what it looses is loosed. There is no reason why we should attempt to prove that the soul can have this faith—this consciousness; or that it can exercise those holy, tender trusts in God which, as a key, open the kingdom. As soon try to prove sunrise! It is affirmed as the great Christian fact known to all sects and churches. And it is a matter for thankfulness that we can assume that this key of the kingdom is within reach of all, free from the dogmatic statements that make and distinguish particular bodies of religious thinkers, and unlike sectarian or political assumptions, that it can never be quite renounced or torn down. Of course we insinuate no dislike or disparagement of dogmatic statements and doctrines—there is a great work for them to do in bringing the key near to man. But independent of any speciality of creed, the faith in God, which we venture to call the key, may be found most active and effectual. The great truth, that “*God is for us and we are for God*” realised, is *the Key*. What criticism cannot do, because it is on another plane than that in which the soul moves, lives, and hopes and loves; what science cannot do because it is weak, and has little spiritual power; what genius, humanity, and self-culture cannot accomplish, because they lack the elements of spirituality and piety, Faith can do and does: it opens the gate—because it passes beyond the negative attitude of the intellect, and the frenzied fever of the imagination, and in calm and clear and loving trust sees God in all, and all under God, and “God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.”

If any one should think that in this paper we have made the key itself to be the kingdom, we will allow that the key is as near the kingdom as any key is to the space it opens. The kingdom itself is but a figure of that indescribable, indefinable, blessed reality, which the New Testament names as the believer's. We might cite the variety of figures in Scripture applied to Christ. He is called the “Way,” the “Truth,” the “Door,” the “*Sheep-fold*,” and the “Lamb.” We prefer to resolve the matter in a prayer that our readers may realize in its deepest meaning the privilege of the Christian's calling, and the privilege of the spiritual nature to have the faith in God which removes mountains, which, being made dominant, is the only key to the Paradise of God which is for evermore.

G. B. P.

SHORT NOTES ON LONG QUESTIONS.

No. II.—A FRAGMENT ON FRAGMENTS.

KNOWLEDGE comes to us piecemeal. If we look at a child we see that it learns by the gradual accumulation of minute items of intelligence, which its little faculties must be often sorely taxed so to put together as to make any reason out of the world at all. And when men address themselves seriously to the task of understanding things in any other than a childish way, they find that they have the child's task again—to learn to interpret fragments. For may not science be altogether thus described? And unscientific fancies, what are they but fragmentary impressions reasoned on as if they constituted wholes? The floating of a feather, for example, is but a fragment of the great phenomenon of weight; the tides are another fragment of the same; the planetary motions exhibit yet another. Fire is a fragment of chemical affinity; respiration another fragment; the rusting of our knives another; light, heat, music, are fragments again, fragments of one thing—vibration. So, if we went on through the entire domain of science, we should surely find that it might all be thus described: it is the interpreting of fragments. If, indeed, we consider, do we not see that it must be so? Our perceptions must be partial, our consciousness fragmentary, by the very limits which constitute us what we are. Nor need we in the least degree complain (nor indeed do we); for if we have but fragments to begin with, these fragments yield us in the end very satisfactory results, and much pleasure in their attainment. Our faculties are precisely adapted—exquisitely adjusted indeed, it seems to us, if we had time to pursue the subject, to the work they are called upon to perform. The interpretation of fragments is just the thing which man's intellect, rightly used, can do; which, when it is rightly trained, it most delights to do. To have fragments given us is to possess the sure means of knowledge.

One thing, however, needs to be noted, obvious though it is; that the fragments which are given us to begin with are often, by virtue of their being fragments, most unlike that which a complete knowledge shows them to be; nay, are most exactly adapted to mislead us: see the floating feather, as remarked, or

the rising of water in a vacuum, as instances of the effect of weight. But this matters little. The illusions arising from causes such as these are illusions which we can, and with infinite profit to ourselves in the process, correct.

From fragments to learn wholes, or out of natural illusions to arrive at truth (which is the same thing), this is manifestly man's problem. We refer to it for this reason, that it seems to us to contain in a clear and matter-of-fact form, the essence of the much-vexed question of the "Authority of Consciousness." Those of us who have not yet outgrown that weakness of the world's infancy, a fondness for metaphysics, are aware that this has become a grand problem in recent times—whether we can trust consciousness; and if not, whether we can have any certainty at all, or must not ever flounder in a hopeless quagmire. This question has been argued and re-argued, and one sees no end. But does not the whole perplexity arise from this simple cause, that the nature of our consciousness to be fragmentary has been forgotten? We may trust our consciousness, certainly, *to give us fragments*. This is what it ought to do—all it ought to do. That we so desperately suspect we cannot trust it (our desperate affirmations to the contrary being the sign of this suspicion), is because we have been trusting to it to give us more. We may call it more, for argument's sake; but in truth, any such *more* were infinitely less.

We receive from our consciousness *fragments* in the metaphysical, just as in the physical or scientific sphere. And for fragments we may trust it, in each sphere alike; in each also mistrusting it alike; that is, knowing that it will cheat us if we misuse it. Its chief misuse being (above all things), to forget that it gives us fragments only.

All this is in words conceded, or rather affirmed, by the doctrine of the limits of man's nature, and the partial character of his apprehensions. It would be curious that it should have been so overlooked in the sphere of metaphysics, if there had not been so many like cases, in respect to men's thoughts of things physical for example, to take off the edge of the singularity.

Consciousness, then, in respect to ourselves, as well as in respect to external things, gives us fragments. Thus, for instance, we have a fragmentary consciousness in respect to our power of physical exertion. We are conscious of the power simply as our own, as if it were inherent in ourselves; but this is evidently a fragment. The power by which we move our arms is not inherent in us; it is derived from our food, and is the very force which was in air and herb. We are conscious again of a power of free will—of arbitrary acting of our own choice—truly conscious of a fragment. What our free will is—

the interpretation of this fragment—has been before suggested in these pages.* We are conscious, also, of being in, and surrounded by, a material world; again a fragmentary consciousness, open to, and soliciting an interpretation. So our consciousness of an isolated individuality—personality as we perhaps mistakenly call it; for surely God, and not ourselves, is the true type of personality—this is a fragment too. And in the moral region again, our consciousness of pain, of sin, of virtue, and of joy; of God's absence—nay, even of His presence—these are fragments. Shall we fear to learn their interpretation? to find in them more perfectness of reason, a wider harmony? Granted that it were to rise above ourselves, may we not rise nearer God?

God has made everything double; one over against another. Everything in nature has in nature also its symbol. And in respect to this task, this privilege, of interpreting fragments, we see the symbol in geology. When the Palæontologist, taking the fragment of some long-lost and buried animal, re-constructs from it the whole, he represents the total work of man. That is the universal problem: from the little given to find the much withheld—best given in that withholding.

This is the sum: the "Authority of Consciousness" dispute rests on a strange yet natural oblivion of what our consciousness must be, and ought to be for its greatest final use. Wholes have been sought, when fragments are all that can be given; and are besides the best that can be given. While these fragments yet await even a serious attempt at their interpretation, may not discussions—surely now proved futile—as to what consciousness does or does not vouch for, and how far we may trust its vouching, be at least deferred?

CORRESPONDENCE.

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY.

To the Editor of the CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR.

SIR,—In the *Spectator* of April I read an article on Systematic Theology by Mr. Dunn, on which I crave room and permission to make a few animadversions. I trust my own desire in doing so

* See *Christian Spectator*, May, 1866, p. 290.

is to elicit truth ; and that therefore neither you nor the author of the article will object to my criticisms, seeing that "truth, like a torch, the more it's shook it shines."

At the outset Mr. Dunn cites with approval the somewhat satirical statements of the article in the *British Quarterly* as to the "enormous structure of paper rubble and dead men's brains" which the treatises of past ages on dogmatic theology would make up.

Now, Sir, with all deference to the well-earned literary and philosophical reputation of Mr. Rogers, to whom the article in the *British Quarterly* is attributed, and in despite of the approbation of Mr. Dunn, I do not see that these sneering remarks were specially called for in the branch of systematic theology. No doubt there is enough of literary rubbish treasured up under this title ; but we never heard that any of the other branches of literature, sacred or profane, was privileged with any special immunity in this respect.

Were a holocaust to be made, as the *British Quarterly* hints at, of dogmatic theology for the nonsense and rubbish it contains, we should have no good reason for refusing to make the subject of incremation lay piles of other literary lumber on every imaginable subject.

Then as to the mistakes of the authors of these treatises—their "impossible vanity," their "vain and visionary science"—the same style of reasoning holds good. As Mr. De Morgan showed some time ago in the pages of the *Athenæum*, no inconsiderable quantity of vain paradox and doting absurdity has been produced within the domain even of mathematics, the most exact and comprehensible of human sciences. Even Homer sometimes nods ; we catch occasionally even a mathematician napping ; and why the doctrinal theologian should be expected to keep wide awake during every moment of his existence, we are at a loss to understand. We fear the author of the article in the *British Quarterly* must have had at least one eye in a somewhat somnolent condition when he penned this sneer at the systematic divine.

Letting this, however, pass, and coming to Mr. Dunn : his principal objection, so far as we can gather, to systematic theology as a science, is the lack of an adequate definition. Neither Mr. Rogers nor Dr. Angus has supplied him with what he conceives to be an adequate definition of the science ; and therefore, so far as we can see, he reasons the science does not exist. But it is surely conceivable that the definitions and the illustrations of both these gentlemen might be open to severe criticism, and yet theology be a science notwithstanding. And this is all the more likely to be the case when we consider that the statements

criticised are in articles, the one in a popular review, the other in such an erudite periodical as the *Sunday at Home*.

Mr. Dunn then condescends to a special instance, the doctrine of total depravity. Here, he finds, as was not wonderful, great difference of opinion and discrepancy of statement. "The question, what is really meant by 'total depravity,' still remains unsettled. How shall we arrive at a satisfactory solution of it? Creeds, confessions, and articles of faith, always regarded as the highest triumph of theological skill, *here* fail us." . . . "Surely," Mr. Dunn concludes—"surely a simple-minded believer will find it both wiser and safer to set *both aside*, and to fall back upon the plain declarations, or, as I should call them, *facts* of Scripture."

In accordance with this, Mr. Dunn alleges subsequently that "the theologian has gained absolutely nothing at all, unless it be gain to exchange simple belief in the fact that all 'have sinned and come short of the glory of God,' for everlasting strife about a doctrine of 'total depravity.'" So far Mr. Dunn. But the misfortune is, what Mr. D. has not observed, that men are not content with simply repeating the *dicta* of Scripture, but insist upon construing them in their own words. But what if this be a necessity of man's cognitive faculty? There is such a thing as an obstinate tendency to analysis and synthesis in the human mind, which the Pope, even in the zenith of his power, was not able to repress, notwithstanding diligent efforts after the same; and we are much afraid Mr. Dunn and those who think with him, will be equally unsuccessful.

But when we have resolved, or constructed, we are equally necessitated to express the *results* of our analysis or synthesis in language. For example, take a much less transcendent doctrine than that of total depravity—the doctrine concerning baptism. Here, Christians of the Pædo-Baptist and anti-Pædo-Baptist schools, while both agreeing to receive baptism as an ordinance, yet greatly differ both as to the *mode* and the *persons* to whom the ordinance is to be applied. Hence the terms, "Pædo-Baptist" and "anti-Pædo-Baptist," "dipping," "immersion," "sprinkling," &c., have passed into use as theological terms, into the vocabulary of the differing sects. But the words in the Greek original are common to the views of both parties. βαπτίζω, βαπτισμός, and βάπτισμα, are, we say, common to both, although the sects understand by them very different things. And are the sects not to be permitted to express their diverse understanding of the same things, in different words? Just so with the doctrine of total depravity. Mr. Dunn ought to know that the doctrine of total depravity is one as to whose signification the Christian sects are far from being agreed. But from Mr. D.'s statement, it would appear that the various sects, and above all that mis-

chievous person the systematic divine, had agreed to invent in their creeds and confessions such plaguy terms as "*total depravity*," &c., as synonymes for the "*Scriptural fact*," and then began an "everlasting strife" about the meaning of them. But surely this is not a true account of the matter. The "everlasting strife," which Mr. D. so much deprecates, began about the "*Scriptural fact*" and about nothing else, as to how it was to be understood; and then, when the "everlasting strife" had gone on for some time, the parties to the strife invented the terms "total" or partial depravity, to express another fact, namely, that they understood the Scriptural fact to have very diverse significations.

And so also with regard to creeds and confessions. These systematic statements of doctrine, which may be regarded as the foundation of all dogmatics, came into being in no other way than from the "everlasting strife," not about the terms used in these documents, but about the "*Scriptural facts*," which different men and sects of men would persist in interpreting in diverse senses, and expressing by differing words and phrases embodied in these creeds and confessions, which they have hung out to the world as their flags or standards of belief. If Mr. Dunn persists that they ought never to have deviated from the words of Scripture, but parrot-like continued only to repeat the "*Scriptural fact*" in the Scriptural words in which they found it couched, let me remind him, in the first place, that *idem per idem* is logically no explanation at all; and in the second place, that if they really wished to understand what they were disputing about they could not help themselves. But what might seem wonderful, Mr. Dunn is guilty himself of the very same offence he charges upon others. I gather from a note that he is opposed to the eternity of future punishments.*

* We have seen lately sundry appeals to the ministers of the Gospel against the impropriety of their continuing to preach the eternal duration of future punishment. But surely the impropriety would be on the other side were they to listen to the advocates of the new doctrine. Granting that a doubt exists as to whether *ÆONIAN*, as applied to the punishment of the wicked, means eternal, what would be gained by converting the doubt into an affirmation, and asserting that, in the case referred to, *æonian* does not mean eternal? The *consensus* of Christendom has interpreted the word *æonian* to mean eternal, both as applied to the rewards of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked. That it is the doctrine of the Bible is admitted by even Rationalistic divines, e.g., Wegscheider. ("*Institutiones Theologiae*," Editio Quinta, pp. 607-8.) Under such circumstances it would surely be far from either prudent or judicious, supposing the preacher *doubted* whether *æonian* were equivalent to eternal in the case referred to, to convert that doubt into an affirmative dogma, and preach the *non-eternity* of *æonian* punishment. And this all the more so, that, *ethically*, nothing whatever is gained in dealing with the mass of men—nay, rather, much would be lost by

The orthodox doctrine is that the word *αἰώνιος* means eternal, as applied both to the rewards of the righteous and the punishments of the wicked. "Oh, no," rejoins Mr. Dunn, "it doesn't mean eternal as applied to the punishment of the wicked." *Et tu Brute, tu quoque!* Here is a departure from the Scriptural "fact" with a vengeance! Why does not Mr. D. tell us that future punishment is *æonian*, and insist upon all parties sticking to that? That would be consistent. But surely there is a substitution here for the "fact" of Scripture, as likely to cause "everlasting strife" as that of "total depravity"! Here our friend is caught hard at work explaining and systematizing the "Scriptural fact" as the most orthodox systematic divine!

But furthermore, if we are to carry out Mr. D.'s method pure and simple, we must all of us learn to speak Hellenistic Greek. There are many barrow-loads of theory and explanation in King James's English Bible which we unfortunate Englishmen use. In fact, every new version of the Scriptures is a new explanation, in which many systems are to be found. The pure Scriptural fact is clearly nothing but the Greek text, minus its various readings, and minus that which must be an accursed thing in Mr. D.'s eyes—a Greek Lexicon.

We pass by Mr. Dunn's criticism on Dr. Angus, &c., in which,

announcing that the punishments of hell were *not* eternal. If I am preaching to the adulterer, and telling him to be chaste; or to the thief, and urging him to be honest; and after having exhausted the utmost resources of my eloquence in plying him with motives for ceasing to do evil and learning to do well—is it likely that I should be more successful by telling him in my peroration, "At all events, if you won't turn, but continue to the end in your evil courses, you have, by the mercy of God, another chance, for He will either, after having kept you for a time in the fires of purgatory, restore you to happiness, or, at all events, put you out of pain by utter annihilation?" I say, what possibly could be gained by dealing thus with the mass of men? for it may be maintained that certain abnormal natures, such as those that are naturally attracted towards *Universalism* or *Destructionism*, may be more powerfully moved by declamation about the disinterestedness of virtue or the hatred of evil, apart from the fear of punishment. It is instructive to notice the deliverance of Kant, the great moralist of Königsberg, on this point, whom no one will accuse for any overweening respect for the conclusions of orthodoxy:—"It belongs to questions by which the questioner, even though he were answered, would be none the wiser (and it may, therefore, be called a *CHILDISH* question)—whether the punishments of hell be finite or eternal in their duration. Were the former alternative taught, it is to be feared that most (as indeed is the case with *all* who believe in purgatory) would say, with the sailor in Moore's *Travels*, 'Well, I'll do my best to stand it out!'" Kant goes on to consider the opposite alternative at a length too great for us to quote. (See Kant's "Religion, innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft." Werke, 10te Theil, Edition Rosenkrantz und Schubert, pp. 80 and 81, Note.)

nevertheless, we see much to take exception were there time and space at disposal ; and will confine ourselves, in the few observations yet to come, to some animadversions upon Mr. D.'s objections to a systematic theology.

Mr. Dunn stumbles upon the truth when he tells us, page 209, "the 'strong attraction' which scientific theology has for many men may well be admitted, for the wish to systematize our knowledge is probably but a result of the natural constitution of our minds ; but it has yet to be shown that Revelation is a proper field for the satisfaction of this desire. Hitherto, little beside harm has resulted from its indulgence on this forbidden ground."

Now, with part of this we entirely concur. The wish to systematize our knowledge is not only "probably, but a result ;" it is *most certainly* a *necessary* result of "the natural constitution of our minds." The whole process of intellection is nothing else but a resolution and recomposition of the data presented to us by the senses. Nothing is more surely established in logic than this. The formation of language, as well as the operation of the laws of thought, all go to prove this—that we know only as we generalize, and if we, in any department of human knowledge, cease to analyze and recompose in the synthesis of thought the elements of that analysis, we arrest arbitrarily and freeze up the workings of the human intellect. Unless we treat the Scriptures as a mere collection of traditional formulæ, like those magical incantations by the utterance of which marvellous effects were supposed to be produced, we must use our understanding upon them, and, while we duly recognize their high claims, treat them as we treat other books. We are necessitated, as Mr. D. well puts it, by the very workings of our natural constitution, to interpret, classify, and seek, to the best of our ability, to understand the Scriptures. Nor is it possible for us to perform this without the use of language as the instrument of thought. We *must* be permitted to express the results of our endeavours to understand the Scriptures in our own language. If we are to use the *λόγος ἐνδιάθετος*, equally, permission must be accorded us to use the *λόγος προφορικός*. It is a necessary postulate of the exercise of the intellectual faculties, that we be allowed to express in language the results of our thought.

It may be, however, that while Mr. Dunn discards dogmatics, he allows exegesis—that he will permit men to expound Scripture, provided they do not generalize the results of their exposition. But even although Mr. D. admit of this, it will not serve his turn. In fact, to be true to himself, he must adhere to the Greek text, pure and simple, and not commit himself to the perils of exegesis ; but if he do so, he may fall, in due time, into the pit

of systematic theology. For, what is exegesis? The interpretation of the contents of a book by means of philosophico-philological rules and principles. In fact, the exegesis of any work is nothing else but a step on the road towards a connected and systematic view of its contents. If exegesis be valid, a further synthesis cannot be refused. For where are we to stop? If I am to be allowed intelligently to apprehend, and state to the best of my ability the contents of, say *one* of Paul's Epistles, it cannot be refused me to strive equally to apprehend and express in language my apprehension of the whole type and scheme of Pauline doctrine. And having gone so far, as little can it be refused me to proceed further, and apply the same process to the whole canon of Scripture. Besides, many of Mr. D.'s objections are wholly beside the mark. Granting that there are many things in Scripture "hard to be understood," as speaking of things far transcending man's lowly sphere, we must never forget that so far forth as the Scriptures contain a revelation, it is a revelation given by our Father to be *understood*, and not to be used as mere mystical formulæ, to be repeated without being intelligently apprehended. I am as ready as Mr. Dunn to object to the validity of a speculative theology, in which men, departing from the facts of Scripture, venture into the regions of the super-sensible, and speculate on topics where they have no guide but those formal principles of the reason, which are given in and for behoof only of the matter drawn from experience. And I am as much opposed as he can be to the lawless use of the understanding in things sacred—such as amplifying the obscure hints of Holy Writ respecting the sphere of the Infinite and Eternal, by conjecture, and the intrusion of the human understanding into regions which are too high for it. I am willing to concede, moreover, that the scholastic divines, and even their successors, the Reformation and post-Reformation divines, have mingled up far too largely the conclusions of their own reason with the legitimate inferences they drew from the Word of God. But this abuse, which arose from the ignorance of these divines as to the limits of human thought, forbids no more the right use of Scripture than the crude speculations of Thales respecting physical science ought to hinder us from pursuing a more legitimate and better-founded method of inquiry. Nor does it in the least militate against the right pursuit of theological science that the Church of England or the Church of Scotland or the Church of Rome is in this or that condition. *That* is nothing whatever to the purpose. That the professed creeds and standards of these bodies of Christians—and, indeed, of *all* bodies of Christians—stand in need of revision, may, no doubt, be true enough. There can be little doubt—as some of

the wiser men of the "denominations" are beginning to see—that they ought to be periodically revised. But what has that to do with the pursuit of theological science—that is, the intelligent apprehension of the Word of God—an intelligent apprehension, to which, as we have already shown, analysis and synthesis are indispensable? Mr. D., I fear, has entirely misapprehended the origin and uses of creeds and confessions of faith. Whence came these documents? From a conspiracy, as Mr. D. seems to believe, to obscure and shut out the Scriptural fact? Assuredly not. They arose because men would persist in understanding and interpreting the Scriptural "fact" diversely. Hence the distinction between heterodox and orthodox, which is as old as the Christian Church. The Scriptural fact became the theme of discussion on the part of different men and parties of men, who understood it differently.

After lengthened controversy—not, observe, about the creed, for it was not then in existence so far as the point under discussion was concerned, but about the "Scriptural fact"—the conviction was arrived at that certain views concerning the matter in question were orthodox, and certain opposed views heterodox. The parties who severally advocated those views embodied the results of their discussion in an article of faith; and thus the creeds grew, article by article, through the ages. No doubt, much that is false and erroneous, and still more that is one-sided, has been in this way embodied in these useful documents; but this is to be remedied, not as Mr. Dunn would have it, by obliterating the whole and beginning *de novo*, but by carrying on the process to its legitimate conclusion. *Magna est veritas, et prævalebit.* The search for truth is a necessary preparation for finding the truth. The astronomy of Ptolemy and Tycho Brahe had much in it that was erroneous, but it was nevertheless the stepping-stone to the astronomy of Copernicus and Newton. The theology of Calvin's Institutes may, in many of its details, fail in gaining our assent; but it was, notwithstanding, a great advance upon that of Augustine, and did immense service to the truth in its day, as the historians of the Reformation can and do bear witness. We are thankful for this and the light we have inherited from our forefathers, though, tried by a more exact philosophy and a more accurate philology, we may find much in their rendering of the truth which requires qualification.

Moreover, no sect, to my knowledge, ever did or does set their creeds and confessions before, or even by, the side of Scripture. No doubt the timid, conservative spirit of many religious people may operate against so frequent a revision of these documents as is desirable; but we maintain that Christian people have a

perfect right to use their understanding upon that Book which God gave them to be *understood*, and to express their concurrence in that understanding of it at which they have conscientiously arrived.

Mr. Dunn's method of getting rid of "everlasting strife," and the other evils of which he complains, reminds us of the recipe of the authors of the "New Moral World" for getting rid of vice—that is, by getting rid of virtue at the same time. Precisely after the same fashion, we are, according to Mr. D., to get rid of heresy by getting rid, at the same instant, of orthodoxy.

I shall forbear to characterize the opinion that the human race have spent centuries of controversy utterly in vain, and that our only resource is to go back and commence *de novo*. Were I to begin to deal with it, I am afraid I should not be able to confine myself to terms sufficiently polite. Such an opinion militates, in truth, not against men, but against God and His government of the world. Far nobler and truer is one little sentence of our English poet than whole tomes written to support such a manifest absurdity,—

"For, I doubt not, thro' the ages an increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened by the process of the suns."

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

WILLIAM NICOLSON.

[We were appealed to on the "*audi alteram partem*" principle to insert these strictures by the Rev. W. Nicolson, M.A., on Mr. Dunn's article, and, willingly complying, doubt not our readers will fully justify the wish of the CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR to be strictly impartial. At the same time, we think that—whether or not all the remarks contained herein are felt to be as conclusive as they appear to be to the writer—all will agree that Mr. Dunn's article was such as to deserve the fullest respect and courtesy from any gentleman who, differing from him in opinion, might very naturally and properly wish to correct his supposed errors.—ED.]

BRIEF NOTICES OF BOOKS.

The Gospel Treasury: An Expository Harmony of the Four Evangelists. The Text in the Words of the Authorised Version, arranged to Greswell's "Harmonia Evangelica." With Analytical Introductions; Scripture Illustrations; Notes Selected from the Most Approved Commentators; Practical Reflections; Geographical Notices; Copious Addenda and Indices; and Seven Graduated Charts, Geographically and Chronologically Localising every Event in the Gospel History of

OUR LORD'S LIFE AND MINISTRY. Compiled by ROBERT MIM-
PRISS. Second Edition. London: Elliot Stock.

THERE'S a title-page for you, reader! And it conveys a good idea of the volume, which is what it professes to be, and is the result of patient, industrious, and conscientious painstaking. It will, no doubt, be found very serviceable by a large class of ministers, village preachers, Bible-class teachers, and all those private Christians who, not having access to a good biblical library, are thankful for judicious and reliable help in their study of the New Testament. And for the class for whom the book has been so industriously and carefully prepared we cordially recommend it.

The Recognition of Friends in Heaven. By the LORD BISHOP OF RIFON, J. B. OWEN, M.A., A. M'AUSSLANE, N. MACLEOD, D.D., &c., &c., &c. London: James Nisbet and Co. 1866.

Lost Friends Found Again; or, Heavenly Solace for Christian Mourners. Consisting of Select Paragraphs from the Works of Celebrated Authors. Edited by E. S. SMEDLEY, &c. London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co. 1865.

THERE are many books which, because of their obviously good intent and the piety which seems to have prompted their production, we are loath to speak slightly of, although, it may be, neither the intellect nor the taste is propitiated by them. And as such are multiplied we find relief in thinking that books which would never help our own growth, nor quicken any of our faculties, are, nevertheless, useful to large classes of our fellow-Christians. We think indeed we are entitled to demand rather high qualifications in men who undertake to discourse of that unseen world whose nearer glories even made the greatest of the Apostles feel the impossibility of uttering them. But to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet, and Christian hearts suffering from sore bereavement will probably feel grateful to writers who provide for them easy and comfortable reading on subjects to which their sorrows make them instinctively turn.

In the former of these two volumes the prose of the authors named is relieved by poetry, much of which is well chosen. In the latter, there are extracts from many of our best writers, with some that are not worthy to be found in the same companionship. In Chap. vii., for instance, on "An Abundant Entrance into the Everlasting Kingdom," we should have been glad to be spared the pages which we are told "the sainted Edward Bickersteth pronounced to be 'very devotional and edifying.'"

The Augustine Hymn Book. A Hymnal for all Churches. Compiled by DAVID THOMAS, D.D., Editor of "The Homilist," &c. London: F. Pitman.

WE heartily sympathize with the compiler of this Hymn-book in his ideas of the proper character of hymns for worship, and more or less, therefore, in his dissatisfaction with most of the hymn-books in present use. And we think he has done excellent service in offering the Churches this hymnal, which is a very decided improvement on many

that we know. If we had space at our command, we would testify our respect for his praiseworthy attempt to supply THE great want remaining in our worship by pointing out some of the many excellences of this collection, and some of what we deem its defects. But it is, to say the least, one of the very best we know. For our own part, if any Christian man of comprehensive culture, combining healthful devoutness and mental robustness with sufficient poetic and musical taste, would give us a collection of some three hundred hymns, the best extant, all of which might well be sung, we would be content and grateful. Dr. Thomas has done admirably.

A History of the Gipsies; with Specimens of the Gipsy Language. By WALTER SIMSON. Edited, with Preface, Introduction, and Notes, and a Disquisition on the Past, Present, and Future of Gipsydom. By JAMES SIMSON. London: Sampson Low and Co. 1865.

THE Gipsies are a remarkable people, and it is worth while to have a reliable statement of all that can be ascertained about them. Such a history the Messrs. Simson have really given us, and the book may be honestly commended for what it professes to be. The author claims John Bunyan as one of the gipsy race.

The Right Honourable and Right Reverend Archibald Campbell Tait, D.C.L., Lord Bishop of London. W. Tegg, London.

This is a very admirable portrait of the Bishop of London, which we are sure his Lordship's numerous friends will receive with great satisfaction.

Specimen Part of the *Holy Bible*, with Illustrations by GUSTAVE DORE. London: Cassell, Petter, and Galpin.

The name of the celebrated French artist who furnishes the illustrations to this edition of the Bible will alone, and deservedly, secure the patronage the enterprising publishers desire. The paper and type are handsome.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

The Way to Rest. By ROBERT VAUGHAN, D.D.

The Parables. By DR. GUTHRIE.

A Precious Saviour. By HENRY JENNINGS.

The Prayer that Teaches to Pray. By Rev. MARCUS DODS, M.A.

Manual of Devotion. By the Same.

The House of Herod.

The Happy Man. By Rev. JOHN PUGH, B.A.

The Lighted Way. By COUSIN BESSIE.

A Summer in Skye. By ALEXANDER SMITH.

Daily Reflections. By G. WYARD.

Beauties and Wonders of Vegetable Life. (Religious Tract Society.)

The World-wide Want.

The Mystery of Pain.

Baync on the Ephesians.

(For remainder, see second page of Wrapper.)

THE
CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR.

JULY, 1866.

THE ROUND TABLE.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LETTER—WILL THE SUN GO DOWN ON WRATH?—GENTLER
MOODS — MICHAELMAS DAISIES — UHLAND — “FURRINERS” —
MARTHA “PUT OUT LIKE.”

MR. LANGSTON, as already intimated, was lost in reverie when his daughter came in with the letter, and he was in no hurry to make himself acquainted with its contents. But when Edith had been called away by some domestic duty, he went into his garden to read it, for he found the influences of nature soothing.

A full hour had passed, and in the western sky the evening star was beginning to be faintly discerned, and still Mr. Langston was in the arbour which had formerly been the happy scene of so many family rejoicings. He had read the resolution and accompanying letter over and over again; and knowing the men, he knew well enough what they meant. His first strong impulse was to shake off the very dust of his feet against the place where he had so long laboured. For some moments he revolved all he had been and all he had done, or at least had tried to be and do, and all he had suffered, during those nearly thirty years of his ministry. He thought of the services he had rendered to those very men over and over again, and to their families; he thought of the life-long sacrifices he had made, that he might serve the people in the gospel of God's son; he thought

of indignity after indignity he had patiently borne for the sake of the Church. And then came vividly before his mind the persons and the characters of the men who had inflicted this additional wound on his spirit, and he pondered, not without bitterness, the way in which he knew the whole town regarded them, and how the church suffered in the general estimation from the connection of such men with it, and the counteractive influence to all his preaching and efforts which they exerted by their whole tone and character. And the more he dwelt on it all, the more was his indignation roused.

It was a barren and useless exercise, however. Worse than barren and useless. No good could come of it. Let a man do his best, day by day, under all circumstances, and then—afford to forget it. Grand and strengthening, and withal divine philosophy, that of Christian Paul—forgetting the things that are behind. But many things had combined to task the endurance of Mr. Langston, and this seemed like the last straw that breaks the camel's back. He rose up from his seat, and stood like a man resolved, and for a moment could have taken up his "burden" against Bablyk-Hythe, as an ancient prophet against Samaria or Jerusalem. His eye flashed, his nostril dilated, his lips were now firmly compressed, and now tended to curl in disdain of the men that ought to be brethren, whom he could consult and esteem and honour, but who were, instead, men whom it was humiliating to have even as antagonists. He felt as the poor goaded patriarch—the grand old Job—baited by hollow friends, and murmured something about "disdain to set with the dogs of my flock." And then a listener would have heard something about "cant" and "hypocrisy," and he felt a mighty tempestuous power within himself to put down a hundred of such men—if only as a Christian man and a pastor to whom the interests of the church as a whole were dear, he dared to take the tone and adopt the course which his wounded sense of righteousness and his honest indignation would prompt, if alone listened to.

And then other persons and groups of persons came on the field of vision; and the dark poison-dropping cloud passed from his brow and heart, and he sank back into his seat, as he thought of one, and another, and another, to whom every word of the Lord that he could speak was precious, who esteemed true life above all things, and whose growth of character was the joy of his heart. One by one they passed before his mind, old men and maidens, young men and even children; they came and presented themselves in spirit before their grieved and sorrowing pastor. He was almost out of the spirit. Or was he more truly "in the spirit?" The true, the eternal, alone seemed

real to him now. He saw himself compassed about by a great cloud of witnesses, and felt that our light afflictions which are but for a moment can be made to yield even here and now something very like a weight of glory. Who was he that God should have honoured him so highly as to use him as He had done, in quickening and guiding redeemed souls? And what were the hardnesses and rudenesses of men to *him*, compared with the rebuffs, and taunts, and revilings, and contradictions of sinners against Himself, that his glorious Lord had endured without uttering a reproach? True, he could have made out a case against the Kierneys and Buzzimans of Bablyk-Hythe; but what a case could not the Christ have made out against the men that surrounded HIM? He grew ashamed of himself for his weakness. Was *this* seeking to have fellowship with Christ even in His sufferings, and to be made conformable to His death? And even at this very moment did not the truly pious members of his flock seem to press nearer to him than the two or three who were not unwilling to wound his spirit? And would he, like a faithless sentry, abandon the post where his captain had placed him? Had he such a coward's heart that he could not endure hardness like a good soldier of Jesus Christ? Grateful faces and loving eyes seemed looking upon him from all sides, as he recalled, not only the dead who had blessed him dying, but the living who drank in truth and goodness from his lips, as the parched flowers drink in dew. Softer feelings came over him; and as he thought of ONE, whose eye seemed even then to look tenderly and yet almost rebukingly, he again rose, but with meeker aspect now, and looking where the sun unclouded was just sinking below the horizon to his golden rest, he bent his head as before the felt presence of Him whom that glorious orb might well symbolize, and resolved to bear his daily cross still, whatever it might be, and to let his ever present Lord direct all his goings.

He had found his rest. Not altogether in the quiet of his garden, not alone in the soft influences of declining day—a softly hazy mellow day toning down towards a clear tranquil pensive evening; but in loyal recognition of Him who hath redeemed the human in all its parts and interests, redeemed man, earth, time; who had, as he knew and felt, redeemed him, was redeeming him now. Truly, when a disciple of Christ can say after Him, “Not my will, but Thine, be done!” then, as once in the Garden of Olives, angel thoughts, if not actually angel faces, show themselves to the soul, strengthening it. And now he looked at the letter as one might look at a stone which had been thrown at him, but had missed hitting. He quietly tore it into small

pieces, and, outside his harbour, throwing them aloft, let the evening breeze which was springing up carry them away.

"Gone;" said he. "So let all angry feelings go; and let me strive to eradicate from my heart all that ever makes these things corrosive. I dare not, like a coward, run from my post; dare not, like a mere hireling shepherd, leave the flock because the wolf cometh. Alas! how often the wolves that ravage Christ's fold wear sheep's clothing. The Chief Shepherd shall command me, and while He says, 'Feed these few poor sheep and these few poor lambs of mine,' I will obey, even should all hell rise against me." Very good, my friend, but perhaps there is no need to say anything about "hell" either.

Softened and strengthened he left the harbour and paced the garden, but soon stood still before a quantity of Michaelmas daisies. He stood looking at them—you might almost say looking into them—for many minutes, and again the pensive stole over all his spirit. For some years now—aye, many—the Michaelmas daisy had had a strange power over him. He never gazed on its purple star-shaped flowers and long dark leaves without calling to mind those lines of Hood's:—

"I remember, I remember,
The roses red and white,
The violets and the lily-cups,
Those flowers made of light!
The lilacs where the robin built,
And where my brother set
The laburnum on his birth-day,—
The tree is living yet!

And then he thought of all whom he had loved and lost, till he began to think he had more friends in heaven than on earth. And one after another they seemed to become present to him; he could almost call them to his side—almost see them again as they used to be, only glorified; still themselves, their own dear selves, not changed into quite different beings. Thank God for the precious law of identity. And as he resumed his walk it was almost as if he were begirt with both the long since and the recently departed, come back to him again; and his boy was by his side, and his girls, one, two, three, and—and—it was beginning to be too much, for, oh! theirs had been such true, true love! He must rouse himself. But still Uhland's poem would come back to him, "Auf der Ueberfahrt," the last verse of which is—

"Nimm nur Fährmann nimm die Miethe,
Die ich gerne dreifach biete!
Zween, die mit mir überführen,
Waren geistige Naturen."

which Longfellow has well translated—

“Take, O boatman, thrice thy fee ;
Take, I give it willingly ;
For, invisibly to thee,
Spirits twain have pass'd with me.”

He quickened his pace. He walked rapidly up and down those dear garden walks. And as the blood began to circulate more briskly he thought of other friends—friends still living, but, alas ! far, far away ; friends to whom, if present, he could pour out all his full heart, all his weakness and all his strength, without any fear of being misunderstood or misconstrued, or of having his frank unbosomings remembered hereafter to his disadvantage. How sad it is, that too often even the frankest and most transparent natures are soon compelled, by close contact with the world (or the church, for that matter), to acquire the fearful habit of wearing a mask. Every honest man, of course, indignantly refuses to pretend to be what he is not, and yet he must not let every eye see all his soul. It does not do to wear one's heart upon one's sleeve, for daws to peck at. Many feel compelled to hide even their best as well as their worst. Our noblest is disbelieved or misconstrued, and so, in self-defence, we conceal our worst ; and many a man, whose whole soul loathes hypocrisy, almost feels as if he were compulsorily walking in a vain show. A Christian minister, for example, is peremptorily expected—at all events by his flock—to be always, everywhere, and everywhen, “the minister.” The Kierneys and Croskills, for instance, would have affected to be piously shocked if Mr. Langston had ever been known to say on a Sunday morning that he felt no inward impulse whatever either to pray or preach ; or, that there were weary hours in which, to tell the truth, he would rather read one of Sir Walter Scott's novels than one of St. Paul's epistles. One very worthy minister of our acquaintance—(true, it was some years ago)—did not feel it safe to allow Shakspeare a place on his shelves in the study, but kept the volume in a cupboard. A Christian minister must have no reactionary seasons. Intellectual and spiritual activity must never be followed by weariness, and the wish to slip the collar for a while. In his case, “the flesh” must not be such “flesh” as Christ recognized. He must be all spirit. Piety must not be robust, masculine piety, nor playful piety, nor literary piety, nor scientific piety, nor social piety, nor patriotic piety, nor, in a word, piety of any other type than—chapel piety ! Else the pious Kierneys and Buzzimans are scandalized, and his “usefulness” is impaired forsooth.

It is matter for thankfulness that this very narrow type of

tyranny of opinion is passing away. There are more than a few ministers in the present day who utterly refuse to acknowledge the pernicious unreality of a false spirituality, let who will look solemn as owls. Is God the God of the chapel only, and not also of the world and the universe? or is He the author of nothing in our nature but the conscience? It will be well for truth and righteousness, well for the church in all its real interests, and well for the world also, when honesty shall rank high above earnestness. Of all men living, Christian ministers have the most hindrances to break through if they would preserve—and they must, on peril of their souls, preserve—transparent integrity, and not veil their own better sense before the ignorance or pseudo-spirituality of Pharisees of any of the seven kinds.

But our narrative belongs to a time and a part of the country in which it was more difficult than it is now perhaps for a minister of any breadth of culture and views to maintain his own naturalness without constant friction. And Mr. Langston knew bitterly well how invaluable were such frank, genial, happy specimens of the Christian and the gentleman as the two friends whose coming he was now longing for.

It was strange, indeed, they had not arrived before, for they had landed nearly a month since. And neither of them had friends so near and dear as he knew himself to be. One, indeed, had no relatives whatever surviving; and the other only very distant ones. How was it they had not arrived? Pray God there be no more heavy tidings for him again, just yet! For his spirit has so many scars—some by no means healed—and some that never will be quite healed in this life. And these two men are more to him now than all the world beside, excepting only that dear image of her mother who will presently sit by him, at the lighting of the evening lamp. What can have hindered them—those dear friends whom he had not seen for these three long years? And then memory went back to the day when the two had started off together. Off to the battle-field; but not to be sharers in the strife. Alas! no, only spectators; and spectators without power to help. For the scene of the mortal struggle they had been summoned to was—a quiet chamber, hushed into solemn stillness; and one of the combatants present in full force was—DEATH! Death conquered, and they fled. And Mr. Langston had not seen them since shaking hands with them, in terrible silence, that morning when they were so suddenly hurried away. Three years ago! And all that time they had been wanderers over the face of the earth. Oh, how he longed to see them—those true dear friends! But how, almost to be dreaded, was the meeting! What sad,

sad changes had taken place; and how differently they will meet from what they had once anticipated, when they said farewell three long years ago, never dreaming to be thus sun-dered, and for so long.

They will find him changed—much changed. When first introduced to the reader, Mr. Langston was young, and life was before him. Now life lies, to a great extent, behind him. His hair fell about in long, loose, grey masses. He often moved listlessly; yet observers would have noticed a good deal of latent energy in him—energy of all kinds. Very clever people, too, would, perhaps, pretend to see a strong will legible in every limb, and feature, and movement, whenever he allowed himself to be roused out of that quietness of demeanour, which, possibly, such very shrewd students of human nature would decide to have been acquired by the influence of time, rather than to have been originally natural; or else dictated, perhaps, by his sense of the wise. I know not. Labours, inward conflicts, and outward battlings, bereavements, and other sore afflictions, made him look older than he was. His dress, too, now was black, which, in his case, was significant, for it was not “professional.” He had no faith in the professional—no liking for it—no respect for it—and at times—perhaps a weakness, who knows?—not much tolerance for it. He had been wont to dress as pleased him, possibly observing the conventional too little; but, though he and Death knew each other well, and he had looked into many a grave, yet at last, as we know, Death so struck him to the heart, through another, that he quietly adopted the sombre colour as his own now for the rest of his days.

The faithful old domestic who had lived with him for so many years, who had received the Mary Fletcher of our early pages, when she entered The Gables as a happy bride, and had nursed all the children, or “had had a good hand in the nursing at all events,” as she said, and who had long been regarded as one of the family in perpetuity, but was herself also changed by the inevitable years from a bonny country lass, into a comely but somewhat heavy-footed body, now came stumping into the garden to “Master.” She found him standing beside the Michaelmas daisies again.

“If you please, sir, there’s two strangers a’ wanting to see you.”

“Two strangers! are you sure they are strangers, Martha?” inquired Mr. Langston.

“Be I sure? yes, quite sure I be, sir.”

“Did they give their names?”

"No, sir. They be furriners, I'm a' thinking; and they've got such beards, they have, to be sure!"

"You remember Mr. Sydney, Martha?"

"Do I remember Muster Sydney? I should think I did, indeed. Poor Muster Sydney! ah, I shall never forget the day he went away—no, not as long as *I* live, I sha'n't. Nor his friend nuther."

"Well, Martha, I am daily expecting them both back again," said Mr. Langston.

"Oh, yes, I know. Miss Edith a' telled me; but lor, it aint them, not a bit on it. Bless you, sir, why do'ee think I should n't know Muster Sydney and Muster Graham? 'Muster!'—there I ask his pardon, Cap'n, I mean, in course."

"Then you are sure neither of them is one of our old friends, Martha?" said Mr. Langston again, inquiringly.

"Bless you, sir, yes, quite sure; as sure as that I ha' got the rheumatiz in my poor knee."

Mr. Langston walked slowly to the house.

The sun was now throwing his last rays, and the brightest of the whole day, on the tops of the beautifully-wrought old chimneys; and the swallows were wheeling and circling round them, and darting in and out under the carved wood-work that bordered each of the gables on the inside, and twittered and chattered, and seemed full of almost mad delight, in eager anticipation, perhaps, of their autumnal flitting. And as he stepped into the quaint old porch, the upper part of whose sides was of open wood-work, carved, too, in those old days when there was time for everything, he thought the flowers that stood there had not smelt so fragrant, nor looked so beautiful all the season. And his dog came to meet him more caressingly than for many a day, so that he had to say, "Down, Juno; down, dog!" But Juno was as mad as the swallows. There was something in the evening, depend upon it. "Why, what's come to the dog?" said Mr. Langston; for Juno would not be said nay to, and persisted in her gambols and caresses, till she coaxed him into patting and fondling her; and then bounded on and ran before him, and turned back to lick his hand, as if she sympathized with her master, let who would like to hurt and annoy him.

"Edith, dear, who are the two gentlemen in the parlour?" he asked of his daughter, as he passed through the sitting-room, where "the things" were set ready for tea. But Edith did not know. She had only caught sight of them as Martha had ushered them through the sitting-room, to the parlour beyond.

“Not ——?”

“No, father, dear, not they; two strangers.” Edith did not know them, then. And Juno was impatient to know who they were, it seemed.

As Mr. Langston entered the large and rather low wainscoted parlour, the strangers were standing with their backs to the door, and looking intently—so intently indeed, that for a moment they did not hear the quiet step of the master of the house—on a picture that hung over the high, curiously-carved mantelpiece. It was a portrait—the portrait of a lady, young, and very lovely. Everybody used to admire it. And those who were most familiar with it used to admire it most. So it was no wonder the two strangers should be attracted by it. But when they heard the nearer step of Mr. Langston, and started, why was one of them struggling to prevent, as it seemed, an outburst of tears, long pent up, perhaps?

It was they.

“Cause every man to go out from me,” said Joseph, in the beautiful old Hebrew story, when he could not refrain himself. “And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known to his brethren. And he wept aloud; and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.”

Mr. Langston had wept as a child, when he used to read this dear old Bible history. And when, years after, it came up in the course of family reading, he never dared to trust himself to read it, but devolved it on another. And I am quite sure he would not have tolerated the thought of the public being admitted to witness this long-yearned for, and yet dreaded, first meeting with the friends of his heart. So the reader will pardon my reticence.

They took no note of time. And Edith was full of silent wonder the while, hoping they had not come on any disagreeable business. For poor Edith shrunk from the idea of her father's being exposed to any more troubles or vexations. He was everything to her now; a thousand, thousand times dearer to her than in the dear old days when the house was full of life, and ——; but Martha burst in on her musing—

“I be a'most put out wi' them there furriners, Miss; a' keepin' o' master all this ere time, an' the tea a' gettin cold, too,—that it wer'.”

Then, presently—“Had n't ye better goo in, Miss Edith, an jest give him a little hint, like? Maybe they'll stop another hourn, else. I'd jest goo in now, if I was you like, that I 'ood.”

But Edith was in no hurry. Though still young, she had

learned patience and quietness in a very effective school. And she drew out some needle-work, prepared to wait patiently.

Martha still stood there; and as Edith seemed disposed to let things take their course, she fidgetted about the room a bit, putting one or two articles that had been moved in their places; but presently returned to the charge—

“But it’s Thu’sday evening, Miss, you forgets,” she remonstrated; “and master w’ont get his tea afore he goes to chapel. That’s what he w’ont.”

Another pause. No sign of any move.

“It do wurrit me so, surely, for people to come here, jest like this now. Why could n’t they a’ come earlier? The tea’s a’ spilin’; all the goodness ’ll be in the first cup, and then the rest ’ll be no better nor cat-lap. I declare I’ll jest goo in myself, Miss Edith, an’ say as how he’s wanted.”

And she went, too. But she, also, was gone some minutes; and when she came back, she had the corner of her check apron to her eyes, and was sobbing in such a manner as greatly to alarm Edith, who instantly started up to go to her father, dreading some new evil had fallen. Martha, however, held her tightly, and said, as well as she could—

“It were actually Muster Sydney an’ Muster Graham!—least-ways, Cap’n—and when I goes in, Miss, there they were, all three of ’em, not much better nor women, I can tell ye. I havn’t a’ seen Master so cut up for—for—not since—since——.” And the good old faithful creature sat herself down to, what she said she must have—“a good cry.”

Edith turned pale, and trembled in every limb. She sat down, but instantly rose up again; and then, hesitating for a moment, once more sank back into her seat.

“Mr. Sydney! and Captain Graham!” and all that had happened since they went away, came back vividly before her mind. “The Mayflower”—as they used to call the lady, whose portrait hung in the parlour—“and, oh! one nearer still, and still dearer; oh, so much dearer and dearer! And her dear, dear father, how he would feel this interview!”

She rose up again at this last thought and went. And now there was a fourth in the room that was thus the meeting-place of the friends. And father and daughter were locked in a close and fond embrace; closer and fonder than ever it used to be, even in the dear old days when she was “Pet” and “Darling,” and he was “Papa, dear,” and “Papa, love!” It was generally “Father,” now. The old name had, somehow, merged into this now. “Papa” did well enough in those precious days of “Auld lang syne,” but now it must be the deeper, holier word.

The good Martha said to herself, “’T aint o’ no use to go

sniffin and sniffin about the house like a cat wi a cold in her head ; that 't aint."

So she wiped her eyes with the corner of her clean check apron, and began bustling about ; though, at first, without any very precise idea of what to do. Presently, however, she hurried back to fetch away the tea-pot, and stand it on the kitchen-hob. Then, of her own accord, she whipped on her bonnet, and bustled down the street, and round the corner, to "the Home Missioner's," to tell him to make haste to chapel, for she "did not think Master ood be at all able to be there in time," and to ask him to begin the service ; and, "if the Master did not come, to do it all, there was a dear man, and she'd explain it all another time." Then she bustled back, congratulating herself on her lucky thought of it's being "Thu'sday Evening ;" and saying to herself—

"Bless me, what a bone it ud be for that 'ere whitey-brown-faced Kierney to pick, and that 'ere canting chap, Buzziman, if Master had forgotten 't were service night !" Then, to use her own phrase, she put her best leg foremost, and hurried back, and spread the board more liberally. And when all was ready, she boldly ventured into the room again ; and, using the prerogative to which such a faithful old friend was entitled, insisted on their all coming in to tea.

(To be continued.)

HADES, OR THE INVISIBLE WORLD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE DESTINY OF THE HUMAN RACE."

(Concluded from page 340.)

AND now, although it be but conjectural, let us *in the light of Scripture* reflect on the *possible* intention of God in establishing this intermediate state *for the believer*, on the *probable* part it will have in the advancement of his character, and on the degree of intercourse which may be supposed to take place *there* between Christian and Christian.

It seems to me impossible to express the probable condition of

the soul on entering the invisible world, in terms more graphic and truthful than those which have been employed for this end by the late Mr. Isaac Taylor. "The spirit," says he, "is then, when freed from the body, to be thrown upon the play of its AFFECTIONS—whether these be malign or benign, pure or depraved; and it is moreover to be thrown upon them in presence of objects of the most stupendous magnitude. In place of the measured and mingled emotions of the present life, there are to be encountered in the next stage of our existence excitements of overwhelming force, and *all of one quality*. And amid them the soul, quiescent in regard to what might move it to wonder or terror, is to be nakedly sensitive to the MORAL QUALITY of what it beholds. Human nature, thus reduced to its most simple element, shall exist in one mood only—that of AN INTENSE CONSCIOUSNESS OF ITS OWN MORAL CONDITION." *

In such a world, with ends so exalted to be accomplished, it seems but reasonable to suppose that it will be a state *in the main of silence and reflection*; to the saint of peaceful and refreshing stillness, conveying to its inhabitants a precious foretaste of that holy rest in God which they shall hereafter enjoy. Nor is it at all probable that such a state would have been named by our Lord himself "paradise," unless it had been for His children a land of delight, a place of joy as well as of rest. It *must* be so; since, whatever may be the *relative defects* either of that state or of its inhabitants, each will be animated by that Divine Spirit, the fruits of which, in all worlds, are love, joy, and peace.

Nor should it be forgotten that "by rest in holy contemplation, far more than in action, is the creature perfected. God may get something from our works. He gets much more when we rest, and so pass out of self and its variableness wholly into His will. Looked at in this way, God's day of rest becomes symbolic of our own. It is a day without an evening. Of other days it is said, the evening and the morning make the day. But on the seventh day we read of no evening—an omission significant and full of deep teaching. All the days of labour have this evening, for they need it; but now the day of days has come, without an evening. Now no darkness or shades return." †

That saints in such a condition may interchange thoughts and words of love and wisdom seems taught us by the relationship between Lazarus and Abraham, and perhaps not less so by the conversation of Moses and Elias with Christ on Mount Tabor. Indeed, some such intercourse between ourselves and those who

* "Saturday Evening," p. 389.

† Juke's "Types of Genesis."

have *instrumentally* formed our characters on earth would seem almost essential to that sense of identity which is needful to make the discipline of this world effective in the invisible for further growth in goodness. Nor will diversities of language offer any obstacle to this communion. *Multæ terricolis lingue, Cœlestibus una.*

That it will be an educational world, a sort of upper school for the believer, I cannot myself doubt. "If the spiritual and the physical parts of our nature are to be severed, and to be held in disunion during an extended period, and yet are afterwards to be recomposed, it would seem probable that the spiritual part which survives will then be occupied in bringing to maturity some of those powers, or in cherishing those habits that were the most obstructed by the movements of that physical machinery which falls to the dust." The soul may then, with a view to its ultimate destiny, be brought, so to speak, "within and among the stupendous inner movements of the universe; and may get a full view of objects, personages, and actions, the merest glimpse of which, constituted as we are of matter and mind, would dis sever the frail structure of nature, or would at least so excite the imagination as to overpower entirely the moral sense."* If this be so, a residence in the world of spirits would seem all but indispensable to the perfection of character, and to fitness for that still higher life, which is to be entered upon after the resurrection.

How the lapse of *time* will be marked there we know not. There will be no signs in the heavens by which to note its passage, and probably no night there. Time *may* therefore seem to pass with a swiftness that to us is inconceivable. If our happiest hours on earth are those which seem to fly with the greatest rapidity, why should not the sense of *nearness* to perfect bliss be vivid or otherwise in proportion to the moral state of each individual? If it be so, to one, years will be but as hours, while to another they may be as weeks or months are to us.

That there will be *innumerable shades of character* in that world can scarcely be doubted, or that these will be marked by corresponding distinctions. Bishop Newton somewhere suggests the remarkable analogy which subsists between the description of heaven (he should have said of *Hades*) which is given in the fourth chapter of the Revelation, as well as in Ezekiel (xl.—xliv.), and that of the *tabernacle service*, which was arranged according to the pattern showed to Moses in the mount. These descriptions may possibly be intended to teach us that the holy

* "Saturday Evening," pp. 381, 388.

and blessed service of the invisible world is somewhat adumbrated by that of the Jewish tabernacle.*

Now as the tabernacle, like the temple, had a threefold division, viz., the holiest of all, the holy place, and the outer court, we shall not perhaps be far from the truth if we suppose that in the world of spirits those who are intended to be the "kings and priests" of the new earth, and who are therefore the peculiar people of God, form a company by themselves, and are *nearer* to God than others; that those who are in a lower state of spiritual development occupy a position which corresponds to "the holy place;" and that the "outer court" worshippers are those who, although believers in Christ, have, in consequence of their negligence and sin, failed while on earth to rise to that moral and spiritual elevation to which they were called. And yet, as was the case in Judæa, they may at other times mingle, acting and reacting on each other in the promotion of truth and holiness.

That the invisible world is to *every* believer a foretaste of everlasting blessedness may safely be assumed; but it by no means follows that it is a world of EQUAL happiness to all. We may *recognize* there our departed Christian friends; nay, we may enjoy their society, and yet by the intercourse be led only the more deeply to regret the wasted opportunities of earth. We may be but outer court worshippers, and they may be in the holiest of all. When *they* rejoice, we may sometimes have to weep. When they reap the reward of their faith and devotedness we may be suffering *by deprivation* the just recompense of our inconsistency and folly. For some will be "saved so as by fire." *Growth* may be anticipated for all; since much that once greatly hindered will be withdrawn for ever. No more will the body be a drag upon the soul. No more will it be the occasion of irritability or evil desire. No more will its necessities chain us to the material, or bring over us weariness and anxiety. But the rate of progress may be very different. For if it be true that human nature in its *present* form is only the rudiment of a more extended existence, we can hardly do otherwise than assume that the future must be so involved in our present constitution as to be affected by it in every step and stage of its advancement. If, then, the "wood, hay, and stubble" which has been reared on a good foundation will, in the invisible, have to be separated from the more precious materials which constitute the solid and

* "The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews favours, by obscure intimations, as well as by the purport of his argument, the Jewish opinion that the tabernacle, and the worship established by Moses in the Arabian desert, were a *symbolic model* of the visible economy of spirits."—Isaac Taylor.

enduring in Christian character, it follows, of course, that while *some*, happily uniting the past with the present, may be able to sing—and with a far deeper meaning than that of David,—“One thing have I [always] desired of the Lord, that I might dwell in the House of the Lord all the days of my life, and now I *see* his beauty, and inquire in his temple;” *others*, unable thus to harmonize the state they have left with that on which they have entered, will have to *unlearn* much on which they once prided themselves, and painfully to *get rid* of more which, had they been wise, would never have been allowed to gather about them.

Such, as I imagine, is Hades, or the invisible world, *in relation to the believer*; and nothing in Scripture, I think, forbids us to suppose that what has been advanced is mainly true: that while the world of which we speak is but *preparatory* to higher blessedness, and probably to more active employments, it is nevertheless a world of peace, of reflection and of improvement; a state of communion with God, not less than of fellowship with man; a paradise, the value of which in relation to our eternal destiny we shall probably never understand, and certainly never adequately appreciate, till we ourselves are permitted to enter it.

Of those who depart hence without any good hope of rest in Christ less can be said. But it is by no means improbable that as the opposite department of *Hades*, which is devoted to men who have not been renewed by the Spirit of God, is also a temporary abode, it may, *as a transition state*, be to multitudes disciplinary and educational, even if it be to others simply punitive, and only preparatory to final and endless condemnation—to *total destruction* both of body and soul in *Gehenna*.

That souls in this condition begin, in the separate state, to reap that which they have sown on earth can scarcely be doubted. Pain and sorrow, “the fruit of their own devices,” is their natural portion. We gather as much as this at least from the parable of the rich man, since he is described as ever *sorrowing*, and parted from the righteous by an impassable gulf. I say “sorrowing,” because the word “torment” does not accurately express our Lord’s thought. The word He uses is *βασάνοις*,—the same word that Matthew adopts (iv. 24) to express the “divers diseases and torments” to which the sick were exposed; and that which Peter selects to denote the suffering of “just Lot,” *vexed* (*ἰβασάνιζεν*) with the filthy conversation of the wicked. In Luke (xvi. 24, 25) another word is used for “tormented” (*ἰδυνᾶμαι*), which is in this same Gospel elsewhere translated “sorrowing” (Luke ii. 48), a phrase which very naturally expresses what we may reasonably suppose to be the rich man’s state of mind.

Another peculiarity should also be noticed, viz., that neither

the joy nor the suffering is represented to us as directly inflicted by God, but rather as the natural working out of law acting retributively *on the mind*. In this respect its revelations, if so they may be termed, differ materially from what we are told regarding the "lake of fire." Whether the fact that Dives, when suffering, distinctly expresses pity for others, and desires their timely repentance, is intended to indicate, as some think, that the retributions of *Hades* may be—nay, that in some cases they *are*, disciplinary as well as punitive, many will, of course, doubt; but it is certainly a very different state of mind from that which is commonly attributed to the lost. It is, at all events, *possible* that, with many, the sorrows of the invisible world may be introductory to that further probation in the world (or age) to come, which Scripture certainly *hints at* (Rev. xxii. 2; Matt. xii. 32).

To those who may be stumbled at the very idea of any probation, beyond that of earth as involving the existence of evil out of hell, it may be remarked that from the teachings of the Bible it is an indisputable fact that evil *existed* before it was manifested on earth, that "the angels who left their first estate" did so, if not under temptation from without, certainly from the workings of evil within them; and that *there is nothing whatever, either in the Bible or in the analogy of God's dealings, which should lead us to suppose that moral trial terminates here for ALL men.*

If then we ask, what, from the teaching, or rather, dim intimations, of Scripture may be regarded as the *probable* condition, immediately after death, of persons who, while on earth, were ignorant of, or unaffected by the Gospel—such as the idolatrous heathen, and those among ourselves who live and die in mere brutal animalism; or further, what is the lot of that great mass of nominal Christians, Papal or Protestant, who, having enjoyed various degrees of light, have yet been untouched by truth in any sense which would involve either its hearty reception or absolute rejection? we may, I think, without presumption say that, with the rest of mankind, they all pass into what is termed *Hades*, or the invisible world, where the soul, immaterial, and destined for a further and future existence, continues to live apart from its earthly habitation; that they dwell, under whatever conditions, in a locality separated from that of the saints, and in a state corresponding to the character they have formed and confirmed when on earth; that, like the righteous, they too are "thrown upon their affections," become keenly "sensitive to the moral quality of what they behold," and exist in one mood only, that of "an intense consciousness of their own moral condition." We may also, I think, find a justification for the further conjecture that life will with them also be in the main one of

silence and reflection, although, perhaps, not unaccompanied by occasional intercourse with others. Yet of this we may be sure, that the very conditions which will tend to enhance the joy of the righteous will deepen the sorrows of those who have misused their opportunities.

That among the unregenerate there will be *degrees* in sorrow corresponding to differences in character, as exact and as real as the differences which we have already supposed will exist among those who have alike departed from the world in the faith of Christ, may be regarded as certain. The heathen, and those who have *never heard* of Christ will be one class. Those who have heard, but heard amiss—heard as if they heard not—will form another. Those who, loving evil better than good, have deliberately refused to listen to the voice of warning, and “counted themselves unworthy of eternal life,” will be a third, and a very different class from either of the preceding. Whether from the parable already noticed we may infer that those who have died in unbelief will look upon, and be able to converse with those who are in a state of rest is by no means clear ; since it is always difficult to separate what may be termed the machinery of such a composition from that which constitutes its essential character ; but it certainly implies, as I have already observed, that *desires* for the deliverance of others from the world of sorrowing and unrest may spring up in the invisible, a state of mind which at least indicates a conviction that the path trodden has been foolish and evil, and which is certainly *an approach* to the penitent renunciation of it, however late such repentance may have been exercised.

Is it wrong, then, to conclude that, in exact accordance with their moral condition, each separate class of the unregenerate in *Hades*, which is to them “a prison,” is shut up, so to speak, alone with his *conscience*, now enlightened to perceive the difference between good and evil ; with his *past self*, whatever may have been its precise character ; and with his *hopes or fears* for the future, according as the one or the other may predominate in his meditations ? Thought, now not to be escaped, may thus burn up one with feverish unrest, and torment another with vain regrets for a wasted life, and ceaseless longings for a peace known to be possessed by those who on earth were ridiculed and despised.

To the Antediluvians—specially mentioned in all probability as those who might be regarded as *the most hopeless*, having perished in their sin by a signal and direct judgment of God—Christ, after His crucifixion, we are plainly told, “went and preached ;” and “*for this cause*,” that they might be “judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the

spirit" (1 Pet. iii. 18—20 ; iv. 6). Why then that most unnatural desire, so commonly felt, to wrench and wrest the apostle's words from their obvious meaning, in order to *get rid* of the supposition that later heathen may elsewhere listen to a message never delivered to them on earth? Why should we not rather *cherish* the hope that the glad tidings of redeeming love may *there* fall upon the ears of myriads as sweet music? Is it *unreasonable*—for it is certainly not unscriptural—to suppose that *then*—made conscious of ill desert, and sensible that they did not while on earth, as they might have done, recognize the invisible in the things that are seen (Rom. i. 20)—they may rejoice to hear that deliverance from evil is yet possible even *for them*, and thus long to be brought under a training adapted to their circumstances, and calculated both to elevate and to bless them?

Sharers in the common lot, the common consequence of the fall in Adam, they have eaten of the fruits of the earth in sorrow *all the days of their life*, and in the sweat of their brow have they sustained existence till they returned unto the ground out of which they were taken; and shall it be accounted a strange thing that now, freed from the body, freed also from the labours and occupations connected with its sustenance, freed from the tyranny of blind passion, and freed too from the despotism of wicked rulers, they should at length lift up their souls to God in hope of ultimately obtaining a knowledge of the true character of their hitherto unknown Redeemer? Less than this can scarcely be included in the words, "Where sin abounded, grace did *much more* abound" (Rom. v. 20).

Nor is the case very different with those who, in various imperfect forms, have heard the Gospel, yet have neglected or misunderstood it. Surely for *them* too there is room for education and improvement. No longer under the "*captivity*" of Satan; no longer bewildered by the incessant occupations and anxieties of mortal life; with no earthly supports to cling to; no "things that are seen" ever conflicting with and obscuring the "things that are unseen;" sensible of their weakness, understanding the nature of moral evil as they never understood it before, and apprehending the character of God in a way of which they were never before conscious, why may not the choice once more be theirs,—to live or die? In the midst of light they may perchance no longer persevere in the folly which characterised their course while in spiritual darkness.

It may, indeed, not be even probable that in the world of transition of which I speak, any sure hope that the day of grace has been enlarged can be enjoyed; it may be impossible that *there* any one should enter into the peace which on earth follows the consciousness of forgiven sin, or be able to speak, as such can,

of being "saved already," or of having "passed from death unto life;" but men may surely cease to "kick against the pricks," and they may have grace given them to wait, amid the "fearful looking for of judgment," with a hope, however faint, that on the "new earth" they may be permitted to serve God, though it be only as "hewers of wood or drawers of water."

I do not, of course, pretend that all this is clearly revealed; for the *direct teachings* of the Bible relate only to *present* duty. But *there is nothing in Scripture against* what has been said; nothing that *forbids* the hope of mercy beyond the grave. On the contrary, there is very much to encourage such an expectation—very much that distinctly points to a large restoration of those whom most account as lost (John xii. 32; Rom. v. 18, 19; xi. 32; Col. i. 19, 20; Rom. viii. 20; Heb. ii. 14; Rev. xxi. 24; Isa. xix. 24, 25; Esek. xvi. 53—55).

But the works of God, whether natural or moral, are, as a rule, gradual. Nothing is perfected without labour and toil, and only by very slow steps can it be supposed that those who have *herc* neglected the things that belong to their eternal peace will be raised from their lost estate, and made fit for the higher occupations of a better world. Thoughts and feelings far enough from purity and goodness may still cleave to them—for sin has its abode in the soul, not in the body—and the eradication of evil habits, the sad result of years of self-indulgence and perversity, may require both time and discipline before they can be lost in perfected holiness. Our God, however, is wonderfully patient, and as He himself tells us, "long-suffering and full of compassion." The work of Christ, too, is greater than we sometimes imagine, His *grace further reaching*, and his pity beyond compare. Let us beware, then, of limiting the Most High; of supposing that we can measure thoughts and intentions which are infinite, or of presuming to assert—which Scripture nowhere does—that a mercy which endureth for ever cannot be exercised in any world but this.

Yet must we not, on the other hand, either deny or seek to evade the thought that a *dread possibility* still remains; that there are those whom silence and sorrow will only harden; that there are those whose spirits will be seared rather than softened by processes which, intended to melt, in their case issue only in deeper insensibility to good. Of such it becomes us not to speak. Stings of conscience, incessant, and unrelieved by distracting occupations, but ever failing to accomplish that for which they have been sent; selfish regrets, unmingled with any higher aspiration; envy and hatred dominant, yet without the possibility of gratification; the utter absence of anything like that "godly sorrow" which leadeth to repentance,—dejection, but no sub-

mission,—despair, but no penitence,—remorse, but no grief,—*these* are the characteristics of the man who, rejecting the gift of God, is rewarded according to his ways.

That the final lot of such will be *utter destruction* is plainly enough revealed. EVIL IS NOT TO BE ETERNAL; and because it was never intended to be so, God graciously, after the Fall, cut off our first parents from the tree of life, *lest, eating thereof, they should live for ever*. IMMORTAL MONSTERS HAVE NO PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE OF GOD. All life is in Christ. We live because He lives. We rise from the dead because He rose. He alone is the "Prince of life,"—the "firstborn from the dead," the "first-fruits of them that slept," and so the sure sign and pledge of the last great harvest.

[The Editor is fully aware that some points touched in this article will for a time have to be regarded as open questions, on which devout and thoughtful men may differ with mutual esteem. He would submit that the term "separate state" takes one important matter for granted, and that it is, perhaps, worthy to be noted that the New Testament, not only does not employ the phrase, but never speaks of a resurrection in the passages which imply unbroken consciousness after death and the immediate being with Christ; and, on the other hand, never implies consciousness and being with Christ as prior to resurrection in those passages in which resurrection is spoken of. If this be true, it is possible that the key to the whole subject is to be looked for and found in this direction. Possibly there is no returning on our path. Quite possibly some of the passages which speak of resurrection are graphic representations to make the fact of a future life more vividly conceivable, and that the true state of the case may hereafter be found to have been presented in those passages which teach continuous life and consciousness after death. The spiritual bodies of Elijah and Moses, who appeared in glory and conversed with Jesus, would really seem very sufficient. We gain nothing by grosser corporeity. The greatest forces are the most subtle, and God Himself, who is Spirit, is perfect.]

A SUGGESTION ON THE MEANING OF THE WORD ἌΙΩΝΙΟΣ (ETERNAL).

BY ONE WHO IS NO SCHOLAR.

I AM not able to discuss this subject on classical grounds. So far, indeed, as anything like real scholarship is concerned, I must confess that my knowledge of Greek is simply nothing. But I think this circumstance will render of none the less value ideas which may bear upon the question from another quarter. Per-

haps, indeed, such ideas may take a simpler, and therefore clearer form, through standing alone. I may say, however, that I believe the results of philological study are entirely in accord with the views I wish to propose.

In the first place it may be remarked that the word *αἰώνιος* was in use long before the New Testament was written. It was chiefly used by Plato (if not first found in him, among the authors known to us) about 400 years before Christ. In the second place it is important to note that the literal meaning of the word—its exact translation, indeed—is the “*always being*” (*ἀεί-ων*); a derivation, I believe, given by Plato himself. Now to understand how Plato came to speak about “the always-being,” and what he meant by it, we must enter a little upon the thoughts which were then interesting men, and try to apprehend the questions they were seeking to solve. I do not think this is difficult, and certainly it is on its own account interesting. We must try to put ourselves back, in feeling, into the condition of knowledge at that time, and then, perhaps we shall scarcely fail to see what question men were mainly battling with; how they treated it; and how far they succeeded: perhaps even we shall almost feel an after-throb of their passion, and faintly share the zeal of their pursuit—the more if the suspicion should occur to us that it is not only an old-world struggle we are called on to witness, but that what they sought we also seek, that their fight is our fight.

In Plato's day men had not succeeded, as in modern days they have, in bringing the visible world under the domain of reason—that is, in tracing a rational order through it. This is the precise achievement of science, and it constitutes the great and most characteristic difference between the present and the ancient mode of thought. We see, by the aid of science, all the phenomena of the physical world as parts of an orderly and intelligible whole, in tracing the connections of which the reason finds its most perfect satisfaction. At least some privileged persons so perceive them; the rest of us believe, and even vaguely feel, that they are so. But in former times this was not the case. No ruling order had been traced in natural phenomena; to the eye of reason they were disorderly—that is, unintelligible. Especially they were unintelligible in this respect, that they began and ended without known or recognizable cause. There was no reason in their coming; no reason in their ceasing. That is, the *causes* of things were not known. For instance, when we see fire consume a piece of wood, we know that the combustion is a result of the union of oxygen with the chief elements of wood (carbon and hydrogen); we know that nothing is destroyed or really ceases to be, but that in the smoke and ashes all the constituents of the wood, and the oxygen besides, still exist. But

the ancients did not know this. To them the consumption of wood by fire was a total ceasing of the wood ; something had been, but was not. What is to us but a mere *change of form* (an intelligible thing), was to them *a ceasing of existence*, a thing totally unintelligible, which the intellect with all its powers repudiates and denies. Or, again, when a ball is thrown against a wall and stops, there is, to our modern scientific apprehension, no *ceasing* of the motion, only a change of its form ; as heat, &c., it continues, goes on indefinitely, ending never. But to the ancient eye the motion was and was not ; nay, motions and things began as arbitrarily, as unintelligibly, as they ended. There was no accounting for anything, we might almost say without exaggerating. Now as knowledge of the phenomena increased, and the lack of reason in them thus became more palpable, this lack of reason became to some minds intolerable.*

There is certain proof that to some minds, and to Plato's emphatically, this unreason in the phenomena of the physical world did become intolerable. They called the physical world, or the "sensible world," as they termed it—the world we perceive by sense—"unintelligible," or "absurd." It did not, would not by virtue of any methods known to them, conform to reason ; and they, being mightily gifted in reason (no men ever more so than some of them), repudiated it accordingly, relegated it to an inferior grade of being, denied that it existed at all in the true sense of existing, and affirmed that there was another world, which *was* intelligible, which did conform to the demands of the intellect. This was the "intelligible world," the world of *ideas*, or archetypes of all things, according to Plato. And it was the *αἰώνιος*.

Why *αἰώνιος* ? Why were the things in this "intelligible world" the *always-being* things ? Why was this particular term adopted—if not, as seems probable to me, created—to describe them ? Surely the answer at once suggests itself. The great unreason and unintelligibility of the sensible world to those men was that the things in it *began to be* and *ceased to be*. That intelligible existence, therefore, or existence according to reason, for which their strongest impulses and convictions compelled them to search, must have presented itself to them with this emphatic

* There is evidently another reason for the arising of this feeling. The lack of order or reason in the phenomena of nature, apart from science, was for a time concealed by Polytheism (or Fetishism, as it has been called), which ascribed all the more prominent natural powers or events to voluntary agents, and peopled earth and air with genii and demons. But as this superstition lost its hold, and yet no real causes were discovered, the *unreason* of the events necessarily became manifest. And the feeling of this unreason was a consequence of the purification of idolatry.

character, that it did not begin or cease. They sought the truly substantial, the absolute, that which existed in a deeper and truer sense than the mere beginning or ceasing things, which in the true sense (they held) did not exist at all. Therefore they called it the *αἰώνιος*.

Now this origin of the term used by the Greeks to express that truer and deeper existence which underlies all that the senses perceive, seems to me to explain the reason that it appears to have a reference to duration. This reference is accidental rather than essential; it arose from the particular course imposed upon the thoughts of men by the limitations of their natural perception. In seeking to arrive at true existence, they had to put aside the characters which stamped non-existence on that which appeared to them to be; and this necessity they expressed by a term which put aside alike ending and beginning. What they demanded was that it should BE; and this they thought they secured by affirming that it *always is*.

A parallel may exhibit the case more clearly. Science also, like philosophy of old, seeks to find and to exhibit the world as intelligible; as a sphere of order, a domain of reason. But it started quite unlike philosophy, even with an express and unconcealed antagonism to it. Far from seeking an absolute beneath phenomena, it made it its especial work to trace out simply the sequence of the phenomena themselves, and to discover the order which they on an attentive examination might reveal. At once its object and its methods were new; the quest of philosophy was utterly broken off, and a different inquiry altogether instituted. Surely it might have been supposed the result also would have been altogether different. But is it so? I think the answer can hardly fail to excite both surprise and pleasure. So far from being different, the result is in all except its terms precisely the same. Science has attempted, and not in vain, to find a rational world beneath the unintelligible seeming. But how has it succeeded? Exactly by recognizing an *αἰώνιος*—an *always-being*; that is, by the affirmation that force and matter neither begin nor cease.

Matter and force are simply the scientific *αἰώνιος*. The doctrine of their absolute conservation—the general statement in which science sums up its net results—simply asserts them as the “always-being;” and to accept them so, bringing all natural events into a series of mere changes of form, makes nature orderly; satisfies the reason in it.

The problem, then, of finding order or rationality in nature, evidently, for some cause, demanded a solution in this form, and hitherto at least has refused any other. It might be interesting to endeavour to trace the causes of this fact, but it would take

us too far above our present lowlier object, which is simply to learn, if it be possible, what may have been the true significance of the word *αἰώνιος* when employed by Christ and His immediate disciples. The case of science surely makes it clear that the assertion of an "always-being" does not carry with it any such signification as we attach to the words "endless duration." The two terms belong to entirely different orders of thought, and have really no connection with each other. Every scientific man holds matter and force strictly as the "always-being;" they underlie and outlast all physical change, and their persistence imparts a character of order to it all. But this implies no opinion whatever on the questions whether matter and force were created—that is *began*,—or will cease to be when the divine power no longer holds them in existence. Probably the vast majority of scientific men hold that matter did begin, and that it will end. But it is none the less an *αἰώνιος* to them.

To come then to the use of the word *αἰώνιος* in the New Testament: first, it may be remarked that the view that has been taken accords very perfectly with what may be called its secondary uses there; any case, for example, in which it is applied to things which evidently are not endless, and for which the translation *age-lasting* has been proposed. Perhaps this view might be taken of Jude 7, where Sodom and Gomorrah are described as suffering the vengeance of *Eternal* fire (*αἰώνιος*). Or again in reference to Romans, xvi, 25, and 2 Tim. i, 9, where the expressions "from the foundation of the world" and "before the world began" are translations of "from eternal (*αἰώνιος*) times" and "before eternal times;" that is, doubtless, as our translators held, before the times which are summed up in the world's history.

This signification, in which the word is applied to definite, though limited epochs, is very simply derived from its primary use: it comes to denote an epoch through denoting, first, that which is the "always-being," the unvarying or permanent element in any given epoch or series of events. We might, perhaps, paraphrase it as "the essential:" it is that which underlies varying forms, and is the *substantial* in them all.

So we see the idea of Paul's use of the term, when, addressing Philemon, he says, that perhaps Onesimus "departed from thee for a season that thou shouldst receive him *for ever*." Not that the relation of master and servant was to be for ever, but that he should now, after his temporary absence, be received into a new and deeper relation, one which pertains to that which is the permanent, amid the shifting elements of life. It is not difficult to trace the same element in the New Testament use of the word *αἰών* (*age*), translated very frequently "world;" as for example, "So shall it be at the end of the world." The word

indicates an epoch, a period in which one central idea is carried out, or some fundamental principle passes through various forms and stages to its development. So it comes to mean any period of time, and of course, for us, emphatically this present world.

But how strongly there cleaves to the word *αἰών* the idea of that which is essential or characteristic in the period or series of events which it denotes, is strikingly shown by the use which St. Paul makes of it in Ephesians ii, 2. "In time past ye walked according to the course (*αἰών*) of this world;" that is, according to its character or principle, the secondary though familiar idea of a certain *time*, falling out of view.

But in those solemn passages in which the destiny of man, for good or ill, seems to rest upon the force of the single term *αἰώνιος*; in the admonition, "Lay hold on eternal life;" in the statement "This is life eternal to know Thee," what is the meaning of the word? In that self-distrust, which on such a theme it were inexcusable not to feel, I would ask my reader, rather than suggest to him, whether the "always-being punishment," the "always-being life," must not mean the true, actual life or punishment as opposed to that which is in seeming merely; the essential; that which relates to the very being of the man, not to his circumstances or changing conditions. Eternal life is spiritual life, and a death that is eternal is spiritual death. The eternal life that was with the Father is the life that was in Christ, by him revealed to man; the life which manifested itself in total sacrifice, in perfect holiness.

For this Christ did for the men of that age, vainly seeking an imaginary *αἰώνιος* in the shadowy region of *Ideas*: He transferred it to the region of the soul, revealed it as a matter of life, and not of thought. To know God, that is eternal life: a knowledge which taxes more powers in man than the highest reach of speculation, demands a withdrawal of the heart from sin, more difficult than any form of intellectual abstraction; yet which is open to the humble, easy to the weak, accessible to the poor, freely bestowed on all who will accept.

By thus transferring the *eternal*—the thought of the true substantial *being*—from the region of conceptions merely to that of the soul and of the life, Christ re-created the moral world for man. Intellectually considered, that is the turning-point of the world's history. From that time the eternal remained a vague imagination no more. Revealed by him to whom it was given to have life in Himself, it became the birthright of those whom He was not ashamed to call His brethren, and took its place for evermore in the heart and consciousness of man. "We know that we have eternal life," said his disciples; "we show unto you

that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us."

Do the words sound strange to us again? Again, has the Eternal fallen away into a dim, far-distant region, so that we long for it, believe in it as a thing to come, claim that we have the beginning of that of which it is the nature that it begins not? If this were our feeling, perhaps reasons might be found for it. Absorption in the temporary might hide the permanent; a life manifested in deeds of self-assertion might fail to recognize the Life that poured itself forth in sacrifice; Desire, which spreads itself out illimitably, might well stand amazed at Love, to which it is enough to give. Yes, reasons may be found which lay hold on hell; but there is this reason, too, that leads us to God's hand, which, though we make our bed in Hades, holds us still. He has bid us—it is His voice we recognize in that still, small voice of man's, which whispers ever, "Law is here;" we feel the fateful force of His decree in that slowly-accumulating weight of patient and jealous watchfulness which falls upon the rigid heads of prejudice and error, like snow upon the iron mountain peaks, and rends them—He has bid us seek again, and seek, or seem to seek, in vain, the absolute beneath the seeming. That task He gave the Greek when He would prepare him for His Son—that dawn which made the world conscious of its darkness ere the Sun of Righteousness arose—He has renewed to us. We, too, have been seeking the Eternal, the Absolute that is beneath the transient that is not, and we, too, have said, "We cannot find it." To what purport but that we may learn, as they learnt, that the Absolute is Life, and is known in knowing God? Why should the old mournful quest have been renewed in wider compass, but to renew, with fuller emphasis, the old, glad answer; what issue to our echo of the old lament, "We know not and we cannot know aught but the transient forms," but the re-echoing also of that old shout of triumph which then revived and shall yet revivify the earth—"We show unto you the Eternal Life."

**"ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY," THE "EIRENIKON,"
THE "DIRECTORIUM ANGLICANUM," AND
"EXETER PONTIFICAL."**

It is related that Oliver Cromwell, in the first speech that he ever made in Parliament, taking note of certain notable signs of

the times—tendencies becoming more and more clearly discernible—exclaimed, with much sharp emphasis, “What are we to expect? What are we coming to? Where do these curious sayings and doings point?” The words might recur to us again and again in connection with the fast developing impulses which are affecting large sections of the Christian community in our own day. There is indeed a marked distinction between the two eras in this—that, whereas Oliver was contemplating the impulse of the times in high and influential regions as *one*, and that utterly Popish, when we begin to cast the horoscope of our own time we are confused by the variety of very decided tendencies which mark out each its separate channel for the thought and aspiration of this generation.

It is well worth our while to note some of these prominent impulses of our time—not in the way of controversy, but simply that we may gather a suggestion or two as to the significance of the tendencies of this many-sided age. Three volumes, lately in circulation, and read more or less extensively, shall direct our thoughts, and serve to mark for us three extreme lines of divergence in the aspirations of the various sections of the Christian community. The first we take up is entitled—

“ORGANIZED CHRISTIANITY.”

It is by the author of the “Destiny of the Human Race.” The sheets of this volume have passed under the eye of one at least of our leading Nonconformist ministers; and whilst that does not pledge the sentiments therein set forth as held by any minister of the Gospel, it certainly indicates that they are considered as worthy of careful consideration. Then again, as if to give further interest to the bold avowals of the author, the published address of the Chairman of the Congregational Union at Bristol last year is almost equally outspoken, and very much in the same direction. We do not profess to review or criticize the book before us. We only take it as representing the advanced ideas of a section of thinkers on matters connected with our ecclesiastical polity. Such ideas gradually make their way, and finally get to themselves a body, and become a power. Taking the points of the writer just as they come, and stating them in the briefest manner, we leave the book to the reading of those who would know the very latest outcome in that direction.

To the author of “Organized Christianity” it appears a mistake to suppose that the Church of Christ is organized and appointed for the conversion of the world—that such is her mission or responsibility. He does not agree that “the ministry” is so specially instituted for conversion as has been put forward

—but rather for edifying. He does not see that the primitive Christians or primitive Churches had any such ideas. Paul did not go for the conversion of all men. He believed himself commissioned to preach the truth to the Gentiles; but rather as a witness to the fulfilment of the great promise and the fulness of the Gospel in its comprehension of all the varieties of the human family. In fact, the primitive Christians present themselves rather in the attitude of persons who watched for the immediate coming of Christ.

But a great power was working to the changing of the hearts of men and of the world itself—the Holy Ghost. After Apostolic times there seems a suspension of that divine power to some extent. We, in our day, are still barren and powerless, comparatively, in our want of that all-conquering energy. Instead of the fulness of those divine gifts, in which is the mark of the Holy Spirit poured out, there came a conviction that God intended by the sanctification of human intellect and the ordinary operations of the Spirit eventually and speedily to subdue the world to the Redeemer. (P. 17.) To this end, organized power was essential. So the church became “organized.” With this grew up the persuasion that there was no salvation for any one out of the Church; that all issues are suspended on belief or unbelief of its teaching; that the word of Christ was pledged to deliver the earth to the saints. To accomplish this, power must be centralized, prompt, perfect. “Persecution should be dared.” Learning, gifts, talent for government, uncommon capacity, are to be looked for as the weapons in the conflict. Bishops became of strange and ominous import. Then, also, the love and faith in A PERSON having faded, there sprung up a further necessity—a THEOLOGY. To the perversion of Christianity, which gradually developed in creeds and systems, and to the minute unhealthy questionings of the Middle Ages, the author, like Mr. Lecky, attributes the persecuting spirit which began to characterize Christianity at an early period. Augustine, not St. Dominic, is responsible for that curse.

As representing this great watchword, the subjection of the world to the Church, the writer goes on to characterize the Roman Catholic system. He traces the working of the same conviction in the Churches of the Reformation. For this end they organize, “build churches, erect colleges, endow chairs, collect pew-rents to sustain preachers.” As his conclusion, the author objects to the idea that to the Church is committed the conversion of the world. He holds that God’s purpose seems rather to prepare the few. To him, the mingling of believer with unbeliever in our service of worship; the indiscriminate circulation of Holy Scripture, or religious tracts; “the communizing of exercises

which pertain to the renewed man by public advertisement of prayer meetings, by placards announcing special seasons of devotion," and so forth, are all unscriptural, unchristian. Thus the machinery of our religious organization is altogether unsanctioned by the mind of God as revealed in His Word. To the denial and merging of these great principles of religion he traces the perversions of Christianity, the small success of Christian work, the low tone of spirituality, and other characteristics of the age. He would do away with an organized and specially trained ministry. He would restrain the indiscriminate circulation of the Holy Scriptures. He would put the Book in the hands of those *desirous* of reading it. For the perusal of the Bible "may be as mischievous to some as it is advantageous to others." "As a rule, the living epistle and oral testimony should precede the written document." The living ministry is THE AGENCY "for the moral and spiritual growth of the body of Christ." He would separate "the preaching of the Gospel to the ignorant and unconverted from the ministry of the Church." He objects to the common tone of preaching the Gospel as a Gospel of fear and the terrors of hell. The author is convinced that the root of fanaticism is to be found in the "notion that God has made the eternal salvation of every sinner to depend on his knowledge or ignorance, his attention or inattention, *while in this world*, to the claims of truth." He denounces the common ideas of missionary enterprise, and instances Madagascar as his model, so far as it goes. There we were compelled to plant the seed, and so leave it. We pass by the author's idea of the Church, to indicate his conception of the ministry of the Church. Here he would enrol all in the Church qualified to instruct others, *including the pastor*—placing him in the background rather than the foreground. He would distinguish and apply, with a speciality, gifts and accomplishments; would set aside the notion of special training now in vogue; would look to the training for a profession, or the education for good social standing, as the only needful literary preparation. He would reserve worship for believers; would delegate the preaching of the Gospel to special occasions. Thus he would redeem the Churches from falsity in practice and profession; would increase spirituality; would promote intellectual enlargement and moral development.

We make no comment on these views. They are certainly radical enough. Yet we must remember that the Chairman of the Congregational Union was not far behind them in some points of his autumn address. We have stated them somewhat in detail because the volume may not be in very general circulation.

That, then, is one line in which the thought of the age is urging.

We turn to another. Dr. Pusey, after evident struggle with himself, at length breaks silence by a comment on the judgment of the Privy Council in the case of Dr. Williams. This calls forth Dr. Manning, and at last leads on to the now pretty well known "EIRENIKON." Dr. Manning had denied that the English Church Establishment could in any right sense be either the Catholic Church or a part of it. Dr. Pusey proceeds to show that it is a part of the Catholic Church. His argument is startling. His purpose in it—his ulterior purpose—is no less so. He would in it prepare the way toward a general consensus of Greek, Roman, and English Churches—and, in fact, all, however widely separated, in one universal Christdom. To do this, requires both daring and ingenuity. Sundry very glaring differences in worship, rite, dogma, institutions, recur to any decently-informed mind. But Dr. Pusey is nothing daunted. The very fact that he holds on at once to his peculiar convictions, and the English Church by law established, shows him capable of great things in that direction. Innocently and subtly the great leader of the Anglican Party takes up his ground. He ignores the custom and practice of the Roman Church. He goes at once to authorized canons, to councils—of Trent and other; and insists that we shall look to these only as our guide.

There is, for example, the dogma of "JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH." Surely our Protestantism, as expressed in our Established Church, is hardly at one with the Romanist ideas of salvation. Let us rub our eyes a little. Dr. Pusey takes up the Tridentine canons, and says, "the same doctrine of grace and justification" is held by both churches." He insists that "there is not one statement in the elaborate chapters on Justification, in the Council of Trent, which any of us could fail of receiving; nor is there one of their anathemas on the subject which in the least rejects any statement of the Church of England."

It is of no use entering into argument here. If the Romanist idea of the ground of salvation and the doctrine by which the Protestant Church was to stand or fall be all one, what more is there to say? Let controversy cease. Let us shut our books, and trouble ourselves no more with thought. "Things are not what they seem." Berkeley's theory has an apt illustration in such spiritual legerdemain. All sacred convictions, all holy verities, become but as the tricks of a Christmas pantomime. The wonder grows as we proceed.

Here is Transubstantiation, now. Rather a stumbling-block to Protestantism, one would think. Pooh, you start at shadows! Dr. Pusey will show you some new light on that point. "My

own conviction is," writes Dr. Pusey, "that our Articles deny Transubstantiation in one sense, and that the Roman Church, according to the explanation of the Catechism of the Council of Trent, affirms it in another." And so he goes on to quote from great names, and from Mr. Palmer in especial, and to reason and unreason, explain and re-explain, distinguish substance and accident, visible and invisible presence, until all distinction is hopelessly submerged, and the unhappy disciple of such teaching is ready to believe or unbelieve anything. It is not the end of this paper to take up the points brought forward as the theme of argument. We wish simply to indicate in what line certain currents of thought and life are sweeping. Yet we cannot help remarking on the terrible immorality and dishonesty of such a course of reasoning. It saps the foundation of all honour in profession, and undermines the foundation of all conviction. Far better to take our part with J. H. Newman. If it was only by such utter confusion of all distinction between true and false, that he felt he could maintain his position in the Established Church of this land, he may well call his present retreat a place of rest. At all events he feels that he preserves to himself honesty, and to truth a definite reality. He is a better Protestant by far even now than Dr. Pusey; and, as a man, has infinitely gained. He rests, not perchance from wearying doubts and peculiar speculations, and morbid introspection; but he rests from that most awful of all tormentors, a conscience stung by a continual sense of inconsistency between position, conviction, and profession; and the ceaseless necessity to do violence to truth and one's own honour. Out of a false position he has reached one which is at least defined, and where the war between conviction and utterance must for him cease. But returning to Dr. Pusey:—It is very different with him. He will keep his position, and he will hold to Tract 90. To do that he must endeavour to twist the avowals of Protestantism so as to extract from them a subtle meaning, non-natural, repellant to the language they use. He must search in the Roman credence for "a soul of truth in things false." He must thus combine, by a kind of legerdemain, and make what is not seem as if it were. He must search in all the prominent Churches of the world for a something which shall communize, mobilize them. Thus he would behold in them all one great assembly, united at base, though separated in their public ministry. Thus he may keep his convictions, however Romanistic, and retain his position in a Church called Protestant. Are they not all one? His soul longs for union and communion on grounds which favour his own peculiar views of sacraments, ordinances, and points of doctrine. He forgets that, thus seeking a balm for his own rest-

lessness, and a shield against the stinging reproaches of Dr. Manning and the calm contempt of Dr. Newman, he would have behind him the bulk of educated Christian Englishmen. True, there rise up in the way of his longings those dreadful blasphemies in the name of the Virgin. He cannot away with them; he is piteously solemn over them. Dr. Newman laughs at him; *he* has taken his stand with that Church to which Dr. Pusey looks with longing eyes, but has not heart to join. From his vantage-ground he looks forth at these terrible idolatries of Mary. He speaks out of the bosom of the Roman Church, and with perfect faith in Pope and Council. He fronts this tirade of Marian rhapsody, and simply says, "You are only shadows of unauthorized enthusiasm, I will none of you!" And so he brushes away all Dr. Pusey's objections, and they seem to pass away at his word as the mist of the breathing from a mirror. Poor Dr. Pusey, an infinitely smaller man, though a far greater scholar, can't get over these dreadful ejaculations. They haunt him. Dr. Newman, the deep-thinking, self-assured man, says, "I know—I see; but I will not be intruded on by these things. I am sufficient to defy them." Curious contrast in the men and their position.

Our space does not permit us to dwell further on the tendency which marks Dr. Pusey's book, a tendency which may be called the symbolik of a great party. It is worth our study, and the materials are plentiful. The "whither" manifest in it is unmistakable. The uneasiness, the painful restlessness associated with a false position and dishonest tampering with plain words, co-operating with the great snare of "the one true Catholic Church," visible in this our day, must drive men to Popery or atheism.

But little space remains to mark a third line in which certain sayings and doings, lately prominent, indicate that a section of the religious world is hurrying. A few sentences must suffice.

We talk a good deal of our Puseyite and Romanistic tendencies. But it really seems there is something worse still. "In the lowest deep a lower deep." Rome is to Protestant minds bad enough. Colenso and rationalism are to many a frightful spectacle. The dragon's tail that drew the stars seems to many shivering observers obvious in such spectacles. We can show them a worse still. In the "Directorium Anglicanum," the "Little Prayer-Book," and the "Exeter Pontifical," we have specimens of a something not Christian at all, but heathen. The last publication is especially notable. When "priests" take to "exorcising" spirits from water, salt, flowers, we may well exclaim, "What are we to expect?" Listen to the ritual:—

"I exorcise thee, creature of salt, by the living God," (here a sign of the cross) "by the true God," (another sign) "by the holy God," (a third sign of the cross) "by the God who, by the prophet Eliseus," and so on. And this for Palm Sunday. A priest, "vested in a red silk cape, and standing upon the third step of the altar," is to parley thus:—"I exorcise thee, creature of flowers and branches . . . that thou, whole army of Satan, thou, whole power of the enemy, thou, whole inroad of evil spirits; be thou rooted up, and pulled out from these creatures of flowers and branches." Now this is simply paganism. Yet this is what we come to *when purity of worship is sought in extraordinary elaboration of ritualism instead of heart adoration.*

From "Organized Christianity" to the "Directorium Anglicanum," is a wide sweep. Yet if Dr. Pusey's dream were possible, such doves would fly to the same window. Thus, and in other diverging lines, religious thought sweeps on in this our England.

THE RELIGIOUS VALUE OF "IN MEMORIAM."

I HAVE entitled this article the religious value rather than the religious teaching of "In Memoriam," because the poem is not a didactic one. That its profound interest is a religious interest must be evident even to the casual reader. Because of this it holds a place in the estimation of students of Tennyson, if not perhaps higher than some of his later poems, yet distinct and apart from them all. But its lessons are not written out like the "maxims" of the master, or the preacher's "doctrines and applications." They are, like the lessons of life, concealed in the records of a human experience and discipline. Emphatically is it true of "In Memoriam," that our sympathy with the poet will determine our judgment of his work. We shall understand the poem as we apprehend his purpose in it; as we sit with him and listen to him, and let his lays unfold themselves to us in regular progression.

The structure and metrical form of "In Memoriam" prescribe the standard of its criticism. The rhythm and rhyme of its stanzas remind us of the later English sonnets; those, for example, of Milton and of Wordsworth. No measure is so fit as this for catching the attention and suspending it. The ear is arrested by the closing cadence of the first line, but not till the fourth line does the responsive cadence come. And so the

thought is constantly carried forward : carried forward, however, with a stately regularity which prevents the attention from being distracted, which indicates that the feeling, though suspended, is dominant still. The ear is made to minister to the mood. How apt this measure is to express the involution of grief, the development of feeling and thought, the "centred passion" that has "leave at times to play," but ever recurs to itself "unmoved, unlessened," the readers of "In Memoriam" well know.

But "In Memoriam" is not a volume of sonnets, nor would the sonnet form have answered the poet's purpose. The sonnet is complete in itself : its closing cadences content the ear ; each sonnet aims to be the perfect setting of one gem of thought, the complete exhibition of one special mood. The lays of "In Memoriam" have each a vital connection with all the rest. The special moods are variations of one passion : there is progress in them and purpose. They succeed one another in a harmony as true as that by which the yesterday of human life determines its to-day. Whatever the beauty of the separate lays, we do them violence when we tear them from their connection. We only understand them fully when we study the poem as a whole, just as we only fully catch the feeling of a sculptured column or pointed arch when we see it in the special place the architect designed for it in nave or transept. There are no closing cadences in "In Memoriam :"—how can there be, when its final lines speak of the

"one far off divine event
To which the whole creation moves?"

The poem leaves us with our attention still suspended : its echoes falling on our ear keep us listening. That chapter of life with which it is concerned is ended, but the life endures. The progress, the divine life-purpose, which began before the poem, ceases not when this is written ; it will not cease

"Until we close with all we loved
And all we flow from, soul in soul."

In the solemn dedication with which the volume opens—written many years after the struggle and triumph it records—the poet is still expectant. He is waiting for a "vaster music," the harmony of a wider knowledge and a deeper reverence. He offers the poem to the "strong son of God, Immortal Love," as the "confusions of a wasted youth," and beseeches Him "in Thy wisdom make me wise."

The objection sometimes taken to "In Memoriam," that it is a poem of doubt, is fully answered by Mr. Robertson, when re-

ferring to the similar objection, that to some it "appears too melancholy ; one long monotone of grief." He says, (Lectures and Addresses, p. 128), "It is simply one of the most victorious songs that ever poet chanted : with the mysterious undertone, no doubt, of sadness which belongs to all human joy, in front of the mysteries of death and sorrow ; but that belongs to 'Paradise Regained,' as well as to 'Paradise Lost ;' to every true note, indeed, of human triumph, except a Bacchanalian drinking-song. And that it should predominate in a monumental record is not particularly unnatural. But readers who never dream of mastering the plan of a work before they pretend to criticise details, can scarcely be expected to perceive that the wail passes into a hymn of solemn and peaceful beauty before it closes."

Readers who master the plan of "In Memoriam" perceive, too, that this triumph is, from the first, anticipated by the poet ; that, in his most anxious struggles, he is set on achieving it. There are two kinds of doubt called by one name, but in reality infinitely unlike. The one is the scepticism of the logical understanding, which will not apprehend what it cannot comprehend. The other is the struggle of a higher nature to realize all its best conceptions ; to verify its beliefs by proving their spiritual support and efficacy. The one indicates rooted distrust ; the other is the manifestation of essential faith.

This latter is the "doubt" of "In Memoriam." It is indicated in the opening lay :—

" I held it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.
But who shall so forecast the years
And find in loss a gain to match ?
Or reach a hand thro' time to catch
The far-off interest of tears ? "

It is not the "truth" which is here questioned, but his own steadfastness. And in the self-assertion of love—the love that will endure but refuses to be "overworn"—

" The love that rose on stronger wings
Unpalsied when it met with death"—

we see the assurance that this wail of despondency shall pass into the peaceful hymn of victory.

This firm resolve asserts itself against the paralysis of grief. At night, indeed, he is powerless, his "will is bondsman to the dark ;" but

" With morning wakes the will, and cries,
'Thou shalt not be the fool of loss.' "

Life is prolonged for victory. It

" Dies not, but endures with pain,
And slowly forms the firmer mind."

When oppressed with the "evil dreams" that "Nature lends," he believes them to be "at strife" with God. There are

" The great world's altar-stairs
That slope thro' darkness up to God ;"

and on which he can "fall" with his "weight of cares." He can still stretch his hands, "lame hands," indeed, but the "hands of faith;" he "feels" Him "Lord of all," and "trusts," however "faintly" "the larger hope." If life be "futile" and "frail," there is a "hope of answer and redress behind the veil." The 36th lay—the deepest in its depression of all the poem—implies that there is victory for brave souls, and that some have already won it. His "friend is richly shrined." The "Ave, Ave, Ave said," the "Adieu, Adieu for evermore," is not the knell of all human hope, but the humble farewell which he who can only sing the "earthly song of woes," takes of those who have won their immortal victory. Even here the burden is not of essential doubt, it is the lament of self-distrust.

"I shall pass: my work will fail."

This doubt is itself but the struggle of faith in the process of its perfecting. In that profoundly beautiful lay—that lay no more beautiful than true, wherein he claims for the doubter a tenderness at least equal to that bestowed on "drowning flies—." Mr. Tennyson himself asserts that in such "honest doubt there lives more faith than in half the creeds." The man who, refusing either to "blind" his "judgment," or to confuse his conscience, strives to make his life "true," must at last "beat his music out." The power which was ineffectual so long as it did but hang over "Sinai's peaks," will be "with" him; and be he poet, or preacher, or homeliest friend, his life, his speech will have in it energy and purpose. The "upright heart and pure" is close upon its rest when its self-distrust is deepest. The poet has already partially recovered peace, and is near the fruition of his love, when piercing the ghastly forms of death, and rejecting any suggestion of real loss, he says:—

" For this alone on Death I wreak
The wrath that garners in my heart;
He put our lives so far apart
We cannot hear each other speak."

Let us but recognize that our doubts are not founded in the

realities of life, but are the utterances of our own depression, and their power to torture us is gone. The turning-point of the 77th Psalm—itself, like "In Memoriam," a poem, in which the cry of difficulty passes into the hymn of trust, is the 10th verse:—"And I said, This is my infirmity, but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High."

The essentially Christian character of "In Memoriam" appears in many of its incidental references; appears eminently in the contrast between the intuitions of immortality in lays 34 and 35, and the 36th lay, in which the poet blesses the name of Him who confirmed them, and "and made them current coin." What is this 36th lay, but a metrical exposition of the opening verses of John's gospel? What controversial vindication of the Incarnation and of the miracles of the Gospel surpasses this in fitness for the present time?

But, indeed, the essentially Christian character of the poem is involved in its very structure. "In Memoriam" divides itself into two parts—the first part closing with lay 56, the second commencing with lay 57. In the former lays, we see the poet gradually mastered by his grief. He is borne into those speculations about life and death, sin and the Divine purpose, which sorrow too readily suggests. By his desire to converse with the dead, and the awe of the dead which personal imperfection gives him, he is brought face to face with the fact of sin, which has for the thoughtful man, whose mind has been fashioned under Christian influences, the subtle attraction of an inscrutable mystery. Oppressed by this, daunted by his appeal to Nature, with a passionate cry his spirit rises against heaven; but heaven is veiled, he cannot read the mystery. Its solution is there, but he cannot reach it: bemoaning his own impotence, feeling that he wrongs his friend "to sing so wildly," he determines he will sing no more. In the second part of the poem, the poet subdues his sorrows; one by one his doubts die out in him; he is brought into communion with the dead; he reaches the higher manhood after which he aspired; he is able, in the "faith which comes of self-control" to "trust the truths that never can be proved."

The secret of this change we read in lay 57. Hitherto the poet has been but thinking of his own loss—aiming at his own consolation. Now he remembers others, whose sadness will be confirmed by his unfinished work. He must do more than "idly break the peace

"Of hearts that beat from day to day,
Half conscious of their dying clay,
And those cold crypts where they shall cease."

For their sakes, he must struggle on; for them he will be able to struggle till he conquers.

"The high muse answered, 'Wherefore grieve
Thy brethren with a fruitless tear?
Abide a little longer here,
And thou shalt take a nobler leave!'"

Again are we reminded of the book of Psalms. It is even thus that Asaph gains courage to face his perplexities, and to endure them. "If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children."

These stanzas are the very turning-point of "In Memoriam." Self-seeking is the source of our direst perplexities; in self-renunciation and regard for others we find our personal faith confirmed, and gain its consolations. When "the shade by which his life was crost" has made the poet "kindly with his kind;" his triumph has begun.

"I will not shut me from my kind,
And, lest I stiffen into stone,
I will not eat my heart alone,
Nor feed with sighs a passing wind:

What profit lies in barren faith,
And vacant yearning, tho' with might
To scale the heaven's highest height,
Or dive beneath the wells of Death?

What find I in the highest place,
But mine own phantom chanting hymns?
And on the depths of death there swims
The reflex of a human face.

I'll rather take what fruit may be
Of sorrow under human skies:
'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise,
Whatever wisdom sleep with thee."

This, then, is the religious value of "In Memoriam"—that it shows us love achieving its triumph by self-conquest. Love ceasing to brood over its own regrets, resigning its dreams of personal fruition, consecrating itself—sadly, it may be, and humbly—to humanity, will find in the hope and progress of humanity its own consolation and reward. When the poet "contemplates all alone" the companionship which was broken, its promise rudely thwarted by death; the "old bitterness" is woken again, and the "low beginnings of content" are broken. When he "contemplates all the work of time," and sees human progress typified in the progress the "solid earth" has made from "tracts of fluent heat" through "cyclic storms" and geological changes—a larger hope is his, and the vision of a high

triumph. The whisper "all is well" is heard by him at length,—

"Well roars the storm to those that hear
A deeper voice across the storm."

And this voice is not an answer to the longings of his private grief; it is a voice for all mankind, proclaiming the spread of social truth and justice, even amid popular fury and royal despotisms, insurrection and bloodshed. While he had been absorbed in his own sorrow he had been startled by doubt, overpowered by mystery; but now that he feels himself one of all mankind he is cheerful and trusting. In the certain progress of the hours, he sees

"That all, as in some piece of art,
Is toil co-operant to an end."

This truth, that social activity is the balm for a wounded spirit, is the same that appears in "Locksley Hall" and in "Maud." Is it not the truth that all things conspire to teach us? Spiritual perplexities disappear in the activities of a broad human charity. The good of any one man is grounded in the general well-being. The care which guides the race is that which guides the single soul. What hope could we have of a final rest, a perfection beyond this world, if we saw no signs of a perfect plan working itself out in society? Is not all our progress through love and grief, through worthy companionships and sorrowful partings, intended to fit us to take our part in securing the general good? Wisdom, self-control, faith—these are not gifts for ourselves alone. While we are living hopefully for others, they are ours in fuller and fuller measure; but when we seclude ourselves within the narrow circle of our own emotions, wisdom and faith will die out, and self-control cannot be exercised.

Pausing for a moment in our review of "In Memoriam," we are reminded of words profounder than those which record even a psalmist's experience. The Voice that speaks with authority proclaims—"Whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it." Nor need we hesitate to quote them in an article on a modern English poem; for do not the words "my sake" at least include the cause of humanity, the truth in man, the hope for man, which are divine? Self-renunciation is the highest form of self-assertion. To allow ourselves to be overborne by circumstance is to forfeit our manhood. The will that resigns itself for a worthy purpose is manhood's choicest prerogative. And all personal consolations wait on such self-resignation; surrendered,

they are not lost, they pass on to that certain period where they shall gather round us for our reward.

" This truth came borne with bier and pall,
I felt it, when I sorrow'd most,
'Tis better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all."

For a time, the poet failed to realize the immortality of love; the suggestion seemed to haunt him that it was but the delusive fancy of the too fond soul. Its reality was not found by him in the strong assertion of his own passion; nor when he "rose up against his doom, And yearned to burst the folded gloom, To bare the eternal Heavens again." It flashed upon him, when quitting his self-isolation, he shared in the common struggle, the common aspiration. In his "dream" of universal "good," he "mingled all the world" with his friend:—

" Thy voice is on the rolling air ;
I hear thee where the waters run ;
Thou standest in the rising sun,
And in the setting thou art fair.

What art thou then ? I cannot guess ;
But tho' I seem in star and flower
To feel thee some diffusive power,
I do not therefore love thee less :

My love involves the love before ;
My love is vaster passion now ;
Tho' mixed with God and nature thou,
I seem to love thee more and more.

Far off thou art, but ever nigh ;
I have thee still, and I rejoice ;
I prosper, circled with thy voice,
I shall not lose thee tho' I die."

With a profound sense of fitness, Mr. Tennyson has appended to "In Memoriam," as its closing stanzas, a marriage lay. Contrasting lay 90 with lay 49, we see how the poet has risen out of the depression which feeds itself with images of solitude and gloom, and anticipates death as the end of struggle, the fruition of love, into a nobler manhood, in full sympathy with life. The same bells that toll for the departed "clash and clang," the marriage joy "to every wandering breeze." The feet of the bride before the altar are "on the dead." Our sorrows and our joys, our friendships and our desolations, our struggles and our triumphs, are all included in one divine life-purpose. There is unity in these; the oneness of a human personality is founded in divine progression; they all bear onward to the

" one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves."

With one more paragraph this article must close. The poet has not in the later lays of his poem answered the doubts which are suggested in the earlier lays; he has done better; he has shown us how he rose superior to them. In lay 47, Mr. Tennyson, with a modesty that should have prevented much hostile criticism, has deprecated our taking "these brief lays of sorrow born" to be "such as closed grave doubts and answers here proposed." But none knows better than the theologian, that very few of our difficulties are resolved in the terms in which we apprehend them. A nobler manhood is ever the best conquest of doubts; a larger, wiser life, in which they disappear, like night-fears in the light of morning; like a child's perplexities in the man's work and triumph. He who "not in vain," has "fought with death," will not waste much time in counting over, one by one, his spoils. Enough for him to raise the song of victory, and by his chant to encourage those who are yet enduring the struggle. That Mr. Tennyson has done this; done it in a true and manly way, is the vindication at once of the theme and of the poem.

A. M.

SHORT NOTES ON LONG QUESTIONS.

No. III.—OF NATURE.

I AM gazing on a glorious landscape. From the hill-side on which I sit, as far as the eye can reach, the plain stretches out before me in all the freshness of the early summer; green, and brown, and gold exquisitely mingled, and overarched by a sky of the deepest and tenderest blue. The declining sun casts long lines of shadow athwart the scene, toning its brilliancy as by a faint whisper of coming rest. On my right hand rises in the distance an amphitheatre of hills, while close beside me on the left stands a group of oaks, from beneath whose shade comes to my ear the music of childish voices. As I drink in the scene it seems almost to raise the soul to heaven; hardly can one believe that this is a portion of that poor earth on which man sins and suffers, and seeks rest in vain. An angel were surely cursed with that primal sin of ambition if he craved an abode more glorious. And yet I know that it is not enough even for me; the eye

seems like a traitor to the heart—it speaks an infinite promise, but the fulfilment fails. The charm it sees in Nature is like a halo round the brow of an inquisitor; it is the face of Nature that is fair—her heart is stern and cruel. She may fill the child's lap with flowers; she crowns the man with thorns.

And no wonder; for what do we find when we examine this enchanting beauty? What, but that it is a transparent cheat? Hear the philosophers discourse of light and colour; they are fictions only—baseless fabrics of a “vision,” which, as they vanish, leave nothing behind but so much motion. “The splendour of the firmament is the transmitted *shiver* of bodies millions of miles distant, which translates itself in our consciousness into the aspect of the stars.” This shiver is conveyed through an all-filling ether, a substance “almost infinitely more attenuated than any gas, but its properties are those of a solid rather than of a gas. It resembles jelly rather than air. . . . Both light and heat [and all the other forces that we find in Nature] are modes of motion.”*

Here is clearly put before us the problem of perception. In one way or other we do not perceive Nature as it is. The view that we are taught to take, and in which, though surely not without some unanswered questionings, we for the most part acquiesce, is, that we perceive it as *more* than it is, marvellously and quite incomprehensibly more; for it is needless to remark that no one has yet suggested even the hint of an explanation how or why mere motion should make us perceive light, colour, beauty, the soul-moving harmonies of sound, every thrill our bodies feel of pleasure, every pang of pain. But the causes of all these things, so far as they are in nature apart from us (we are taught), are motions merely—vibrations for the most part of small particles.

This view—that matter and motion give us our perception of Nature—appears to me totally untenable on many grounds, but I waive, for the present, all other arguments but these; namely, that it is opposed to what we know in all cases with which the question can be compared, and that the fragmentary nature of our consciousness gives us a solution at once more reasonable in itself, and more conformable to experience. First, the idea that the impressions we receive from Nature surpass the object which causes them is opposed to experience in all cases in which we can put the question to the test. It is enough to refer in general to obvious circumstances—that the eye can perceive only a part, cannot indeed penetrate below surface, and that the apparent

* Prof. Tyndall. “Fortnightly Review,” Dec. 1865.

bulk of objects is ever less than their true dimensions. If we take the sense of touch, on the other hand, the extreme inadequacy of the impressions which it gives us is manifest. It is but a very small part of any bulky object that the hands can feel at any given time, and many qualities of bodies are altogether beyond their reach. In short, the idea which we form of any solid object, is based, not merely upon the impressions conveyed to us, but upon a mental process of reflection, by which that is thought of as existing which is not contained in our impression; we add the unseen parts: if it be distant, we allow for distance—we include weight; we recognize the substance as filling, with a certain structure, all the space it occupies: in fact, we think of it not as we do perceive it, but as we think we should perceive it if we perfectly examined it. In thinking of it thus, we add what is not, what cannot be, in our impression of it. Therefore, when I am told to think of Nature as being less than my impression, I reply that to do so is contrary to my experience—that is, to all my experience of a like kind which I am capable of putting to the test.

There are, however, one or two apparent exceptions. First, there are pictures, which produce upon the beholder, an impression for surpassing that of a merely coloured surface. To this it is to be said, that in so far as the impression is other than that of a coloured surface merely, it depends upon the spectator's previous knowledge, and is an act of thought; the feeling is mental, not sensational, and therefore is not parallel to the case we are considering. Much might be said on Nature regarded as a picture, but it does not belong strictly to our present subject. Again, there are objects like the kaleidoscope, in which by a simple mechanism, more or less beautiful and surprising results are produced upon our senses. It might seem that here we have an instance in which the impression surpasses the object; but the case of the kaleidoscope appears to me one of the most striking arguments on the other side. In the first place it is true the symmetrical figures presented to the eye are not in the instrument; but there is in the instrument an arrangement of reflecting glasses; and, secondly, the case is most precisely opposite to the view of Nature that I combat. In the kaleidoscope there is found, on examination, an adaptation to produce upon us, the impressions we receive from it. In respect to Nature the case is the reverse. Here we seem to find, upon examination, no such adaptation. What we are called on to believe is, that mere motions produce in us ecstasy and horror—the very raptures of heaven, the extreme of awe; a belief which, if there were no other grounds for rejecting it, even so small an example of the reason that is in all things as the

kaleidoscope, would forbid us to entertain. Examination discovers reason in the one case, banishes it in the other.

I repeat, then, that to suppose the impressions we receive from Nature are caused by matter and motion, is contrary to all experience. There is, secondly, a better thought upon the subject, presented to us in the reflection that our consciousness is fragmentary. Doubtless, Nature is not less than our impression; but may we not with just as little doubt affirm that it is more? Though, in our perception, it is not magnified, it *is* made less. If we would know Nature truly, how should we proceed; what course does reason dictate, experience sanction? It is this: to think of it as an existence, truly containing qualities and powers which escape our immediate view; powers which are adapted to effect all that nature works in our experience; all impulses of delight or agony, of passionate emotion or solemn aspiration; but which cannot be measured even by these. Deep as our apprehension may be, and doubtless truest when most deep, it is but a fragment still.

And here, it seems to me, is the clue (not really less probable, because so simple), to the idea of Nature, as "matter of force," which has obtained so firm a lodgment in our minds. This idea is but an instance of a fragmentary consciousness, reasoned on as if it were a whole. Taking their partial perception as the basis of their thought, men have inferred a theory which proves, of course, insufficient for the facts. The natural supposition of a principle of "lightness" to account for the rising of certain bodies, illustrates the case. Here was a partial perception—the rising body being seen, but not the superincumbent weight—and a false supposition followed, corrected by a larger knowledge, and an allowance made in thought for elements unperceived.

In fine, Nature cannot be "matter and motion," because of what it does; but that theory has been forced on us by the fragmentary nature of our consciousness, whereby a partial apprehension has come to be treated as a whole.

THE REFORM DISCUSSIONS.

To all who have faith in the value of our old constitution, and who, though desirous of seeing its anomalies redressed, have a wise distrust of all violent and voluntary changes, the experience of the last three months of interminable wrangling—in which all considerations of wisdom and prudence seem to have been forgotten by those who seem determined, at any cost, to maintain things

as they are, and if they cannot altogether defeat, at least, to delay the most moderate Reform—has been sufficiently disheartening. We are no admirers of precipitate legislation, nor do we think that any injury would have been sustained by the popular cause if the settlement of the question had, for any sufficient reason, been postponed for another session. It is not to be forgotten that the Government felt that a more deliberate procedure would be the safest and best, and simply asked the House to decide upon one part of the subject during the present year, and the course of events has amply justified the wisdom of the plan which Mr. Gladstone recommended, and which he was only led to abandon in the vain hope of conciliating the more refractory members of his own party. The Ministry, therefore, it was evident, were in no violent hurry ; and if there had been any honest reason for delay, if the necessary information had been defective, if there had been some special circumstances rendering the agitation of such grave questions at present undesirable, if there had been any prospect that another year would have found the opponents of Reform more disposed to accept an equitable settlement, its friends certainly might very well have been content to wait. Even a Royal Commission, if it had been likely to render any practical service to elicit information not otherwise attainable, or to settle any of the little questions which, at first sight, seem as though they might easily be brought to an authoritative and final test, might have been acceded, provided its functions had been carefully defined, and its duty had been restricted to a collation of facts, or an arrangement of mere details, without any interference with the great principles of the measure. The reason for such delay, however, is not very apparent, especially considering how many years the question has been under consideration, the number of measures in which Parliament has been invited to deal with it, the infinite variety of statistics in relation to its different parts which have been collected, and the strong opinions about it which have been pronounced by those most clamorous for procrastination. The truth is, delay has been sought not because opinions were crude and unformed, but because they were so definite and obstinate ; and because their champions, feeling the difficulty of maintaining them in open fight, had no other course but to trust to the chapter of accidents. For the same reason, figures have been demanded, not that there was any chance of their altering a foregone conclusion ; but in the hope that they might, by careful manipulation, be twisted so as to supply material for a new attack. Throughout the session this has been the policy of the Conservative party, a policy of tricks and intrigues, of unprincipled coalitions and dishonourable surprises, of intrigue and finesse, of evasion and delays, rather than of manly and straightforward

warfare ; and it is one which, on every account, is to be deeply regretted. It is quite possible, indeed probable, that they may succeed in their design of deferring the Reform Bill for another year, though, in the presence of Mr. Gladstone's inflexible determination, even that is problematical ; but if they accomplish even this poor result it will be by the loss of their own prestige, and the forfeiture of their legitimate influence. As Liberals, perhaps, we need not very seriously deplore this ; but we confess we do not think it good for the country, or for the cause of progress, that one of our great parties should renounce every pretension to high-minded statesmanship, and sink down into a mere faction, which exists only for purposes of obstruction, and carries on its warfare by expedients which might be tolerable in the town council of Little Pedlington, but are as unworthy the dignity as happily they are foreign to the practice of a British House of Commons.

The Government certainly need not disturb themselves about the issue of such tactics, for they have served only to elevate their character and strengthen their position. We do not say that they have not committed any mistakes ; but they are light and venial indeed, as compared with those into which their opponents have fallen. They have certainly never forgotten that they were English gentlemen, and under extraordinary provocations—of the exten of which none but those who have witnessed some of the scenes in the House can form any adequate conception—have preserved a marvellous amount of self-control. Their policy has, at all events, been straightforward and unmistakeable. Reasonable concessions have been freely made, but from first to last there has been no faltering of purpose, and no attempt to catch votes by hanging out false colours or encouraging visionary hopes. They may have been extremely simple in supposing that a House of Commons, in which the Liberal party had a majority of more than seventy, most of whom had already committed themselves to an extension of the franchise to a lower point than that which they proposed would pass the very moderate measure which they introduced, and so take a decided step towards the realization of hopes which the promises of successive speeches from the Throne, under several different administrations, had encouraged the people to entertain. It is, we suppose, very simple to believe politicians, especially in those speeches which they make on the hustings for the purpose of securing votes, and of this simplicity they were undoubtedly guilty. They were fools enough to believe in political honesty and to esteem it a virtue, and they paid the penalty in a division so narrow, that less resolute and sincere men might have accepted it as decisive of the fate of their measure. How far it was ex-

pedient and wise to divide the Bill into two portions it does not much concern us to decide. That was certainly the nominal issue which was raised by Earl Grosvenor, but the tone of the speeches, with very few exceptions, indicated how far it was from being the real one; and proved that, had a different course been adopted, and a complete Bill been introduced at first, those who were so anxious for comprehensive legislation would have declaimed just as loudly against the absurdity of expecting Parliament to deal at once with a question having so many branches.

The truth is, the idea of Reform is altogether unwelcome, and whether it be dealt with in one measure or half-a-dozen, whether Redistribution of Seats or Extension of the Franchise be taken first, whether small boroughs be disfranchised or grouped, the particular proposal of the hour is sure to be unacceptable, and if preference for some other course be avowed it will only be because the circumstances of the time appear to render it impracticable. If it were thought to be possible it would be equally objectionable. A party which adopts such tactics as these, which is afraid boldly to take its stand on its own distinctive principles, and maintain them at all hazards, which, in utter despair of success on any direct issue which it may raise, is ready to take advantage of every opportunity to inflict annoyance upon those whom it dare not meet in fair encounter, planning well-laid ambushes, forming all kinds of unholy and unnatural alliances, and advocating for the nonce, measures the most opposite to all its traditions and oft-repeated opinions, places itself in an utterly false position, and thus throws away the power it might possess for modifying proceedings which it cannot altogether control. Its movements must be tainted with insincerity, and there can be no more fertile source of weakness in political as in commercial or social life. We need no other proof of this than has been afforded by the events of the past three weeks, during which the party of Reform has been profiting by the unaccountable blunders of the Opposition. Englishmen are prepared for great differences of opinion, and there is no place where an honest and consistent maintenance of sentiment, however opposed to those of the majority, is treated with more respect than in the House of Commons. But there is no place, on the other hand, where sharp practice is more certain to meet with condign punishment. It seemed a very clever dodge for the Tory party to come out as the champions of electoral purity, and by stealing a division to humiliate the Ministry and encumber the Bill, but the success of the discreditable manœuvre on that Monday was the most unfortunate thing that could have happened to the victors. It first tempted

them to repeat the proceeding on Mr. Clay's Bill, and in the debate, which resembled more a masquerade than a serious parliamentary discussion, they one and all appeared as advocates of the widest possible extension of the franchise, nay, of Universal Suffrage itself, provided only an educational test could be applied. The subject was one, undoubtedly, on which a honest difference of opinion might, and did exist among the sincere friends of Reform, but the weakness of the Tory party was that their avowals were not honest, that they were simply acting a part, and that everybody knew it. It was assuredly a melancholy sight for a House of Commons, to see men, who aspire to be its leaders, stand up and, for purely party purposes, advocate a measure which, had they believed it possible to adopt, they would have been the first and most strenuous to condemn. There is an old proverb that all things are fair in politics and love, and the Conservatives appear to have accepted it in its most extreme significance. They have found, however, that there are limits which cannot be transgressed with impunity, and the steady decline of their minorities, has marked the sense which the House of Commons entertain of such crooked policy. Lord Stanley's defeat, contributing very much to that of Mr. Walpole, marked the turn of the tide, and the new scheme of talking the bill out, which was the next expedient devised, only served to raise the majorities of the Government and give it a prestige which it had not previously enjoyed. Perhaps the Conservative party may understand by this time that their position would have been stronger, and their prospects of dealing with the Reform question much more satisfactory, if they had adhered to the pledge given by their leader at the commencement of the session, and which Mr. Gladstone quoted with so much effect in one of the debates. Lord Derby, in thus foreshadowing the course of his party, has been like a worthy in whose weather predictions we were once accustomed to repose implicit confidence, only that we invariably interpreted them in an opposite sense to that which he intended, and always anticipating foul weather when he prophesied fair. Let us hope that when his Lordship assured us that his party would do just what they have left undone, and would leave undone the very things they have done, he was perfectly sincere, and that he really intended to have a fair honest fight. But, unfortunately, there was one, at least, in his council, for whom old habits have been too strong, who, like the Indian youth, who retained in the home of civilization his early instincts, and seized the first opportunity to return to his forest haunts and savage life, preserved so innate a love of subtle intrigue that he could not resist the temptation when it presented itself, and so falsified all the fair professions of his superior.

Be this as it may, the result has been not only to bring the disaster on the party, but to lower that feeling of respect with which it is desirable that a people should always regard its rulers. If it was thought wise to let the nation understand that legislation was to a large extent a piece of chicane, that the cleverest trickster was the greatest statesman, and that to resist popular demands is the grandest achievement which the so-called representatives of the people can set before themselves, it could not have been more effectually done. That such impressions have been given is certain; what their ultimate effect will be, it is not possible to predict—and, indeed, those most concerned do not seem to think it worth while to inquire. Every year for which they can delay the democratic invasion which, according to the prophecies of their favourite orators, is to sweep away all that is precious in our old constitution, and lower the country from the high position she at present holds to the level of America, or even of the Australian colonies, is, in their judgment, a great gain, for which they are willing to fight hard and not very honourable battles. They seem to forget that if the “ugly rush” is ever to come, their present course will make it far more dangerous and fatal than it would otherwise have been. Nothing certainly can be less truly conservative than the policy they pursue. Everywhere in relation to social and ecclesiastical, as much as political questions, we find them acting upon the same principles, deprecating every change, and meeting every proposition—however reasonable in itself—by what has been truly called the “thin end of the wedge” argument, refusing every concession until the time for making it with any grace is gone, always compelled to fall back, and fighting in such a style as to render the defence of the intrenchment on which they retreat more difficult than before. No abuse seems too flagrant for them to defend, no point too insignificant for them to contest. They fight for an oath which they declare not to be worth as much as the parchment on which it is written, with as much earnestness as though the whole constitution in Church and State were at stake; they talk about small boroughs as though the security of the Crown depended upon their maintenance. To give a seven-pound householder a vote, or admit a Dissenter to a seat in the convocation of his University, or a fellowship in his College, are, in their judgment, so far as we may gather it from their conduct, propositions so monstrous, that they can only contemplate with horror the wickedness of the age in which they can be entertained, and sigh over the miserable fate which has cast their lot in such unhappy times. The air all around them is charged with elements of destruction, and it is their function to ward them off that sacred ark of the constitution of which they are the sworn defenders.

Hence, they stand prepared to resist every innovation, for, though it may seem good in itself, they feel assured it contains the seed of many future evils.

It might have been thought that experience would have shown them the folly of this course; but there are a class of men whom even experience cannot instruct, and our English Tories belong to the number. They seem as though they were always walking in the dark, and, however many steps they take with perfect safety and even manifest advantage, cannot be persuaded that the next will not hurry them to certain destruction. Thirty-five years ago they were just as much afraid of those ten-pound householders—whose doings have called forth such eulogiums from Mr. Lowe—as they are now of the seven-pounders. “They (happily for themselves) never *are* but always *to be*” ruined; and they seem unable to comprehend that the constant falsification of the prophecies, which they still reiterate with unabated assurance, has deprived their words of all their point, and that men only shrug their shoulders to express their contempt for such drivelling feebleness. True Conservatism has its own work to do, especially in an old country like ours, where progress, in order to be permanent, needs to make every step certain, and where those who counsel moderation, and contribute that amount of restraining force which regard for the past should supply, do real service. But such Conservatism should respect the great principles of right, should be capable of taking enlightened and comprehensive views of the tendencies at work around it, should know when to yield as well as when to stand fast, should be as ready for progress when progress is shown to be wise as prepared for resistance when resistance is necessary—should, in short, be as far as possible removed from that blind instinct which regards all change with aversion, and carries out everywhere the principle that “whatever is is right.” Conservatism of this order will always have its weight in an order-loving and somewhat phlegmatic race like ours; and if our Conservatives have not this influence, it is not simply because “time and the social forces are against them,” but still more, because they are against themselves. They might long ere this have repaired the effects of their blunders on Catholic Emancipation, Dissenters’ Tests, Representative Reform, and Free Trade; but they appear to be enfeebled by the unavowed conviction that the immunities of the privileged classes rest on an unsafe foundation, and that they can be maintained intact only by opposing with all their might every movement tending, in however small a degree, to the increase of democratic power. Meanwhile they are, by their bitter and contemptuous treatment of the people, provoking that very democracy, whose coming power they so intensely dread,

and so rendering the defeat which must certainly come the more humiliating and the more fatal.

In nothing is this party of resistance more mistaken than in its estimate of the temper of the working classes. They see them fully employed and highly paid, enjoying a prosperity never known before; in many trades, as unfortunately for themselves as for the general interests of the community, "masters of the situation," and, therefore, not very eager for political conflict. There is no excitement like that which heralded, and, in fact, carried the first Reform Bill. No hungry mobs are clamouring for "the Bill" under the notion, that in some undefined way, the Bill will give them bread. There have been (and if occasion arise there will be again) meetings numerous, enthusiastic, and determined; but they have been eminently peaceful. Wise men would welcome such a state of the popular mind, as rendering moderate projects of Reform possible and safe. Not so our Lowes and Cranbournes, our Horsmans and Elchos. They deprecate agitation, and yet would postpone or refuse Reform, because there has been no popular excitement in its favour. At the slight hint of John Bright's not very wise letter to the people of Birmingham, they were ready to denounce him as a violent and revolutionary demagogue, yet they are themselves resorting to far stronger measures than any which he suggested by taunting the people with their quietness, and quoting it as evidence of their indifference to the enjoyment of political rights. They may be assured, however, that they were never more mistaken. The working classes of England are a very different body from any with whom our aristocracy have ever had to deal before. They have immense power, and they know it, and when they see the opportunity they will not be slow to use it. They have a greater stake in the country than they ever had before; for not only are their wages high, but those habits of improvidence, which have done so much to prevent their progress, have been to some extent corrected, and savings' banks, building societies, and co-operative works have led them to make investments of their surplus earnings. The penny press has done a world of good in educating them in the understanding of political principles and movements. It is simply absurd to suppose that those men are content to be excluded from all share in the government of the country, and every time that an election occurs to feel that they have to wear the badge of an inferiority of which they are certainly not conscious. They are not impatient, because they have no very crying grievances requiring redress, and they have been so often promised an extension of the suffrage that, until they are convinced that their trust in the honour of English statesmen has been misplaced,

they are not willing to commit themselves to any active agitation. But let that confidence once be destroyed, and let them feel that they must trust to themselves to work out their own political elevation, and then those who have calculated on their political apathy will find how egregiously they have been misled, and will be constrained to pass a measure of Reform very different from that about which they have been haggling during the present session.

We should be very sorry, however, to place the question on such a basis. There are other considerations of respect for the rights and feelings of others, and of regard to the truest interests of the nation at large, which ought to counsel concession, apart altogether from any references to the ulterior consequences which a refusal of the popular demands might involve. The intense selfishness which has characterized a good deal of the opposition to Reform, has been utterly unworthy of the classes by whom it has been displayed. The great difficulty in the way of advance is, that a large portion of the middle classes, feeling that they exercise great influence in the counsels of the nation, have been willing rather to suffer the inconveniences and annoyances of that aristocratic pretension which is still so predominant even in the House of Commons, than to run the risk of the intrusion of a democracy into privileges which they regard as exclusively their own. The contemptuous and cynical scorn poured upon every reference to abstract principles, the desire to represent every appeal to equity and kindly feeling as vapid sentimentalism, the unfair way in which Mr. Gladstone's celebrated flesh-and-blood argument has been distorted and made to look ridiculous, all evince the same determination to hold fast, as far as possible, by the political monopoly at present enjoyed. Mr. Bright has been taunted with a desire to array class against class; but it is they who have cheered on vociferously every slanderer of the English people, who have justified every anomaly and injustice on the ground that it provides for the maintenance of certain class interests, who have sought to draw broad the line of demarcation between county and borough, and urban and rural voters, as though they were antagonistic forces whose claims require to be rigidly adjusted lest the one should take advantage of the other, and who have talked of the democracy as though it would have no respect to the rights of property or station, who are more fairly open to this charge. The absurd and exaggerated alarm about the introduction of a limited number of working men into the constituency, as though they would be sufficient to change the whole aspect of affairs in a nation which still has an hereditary house of Peers, and whose popular assembly is so largely composed of the scions

and relations of the aristocracy, is only another illustration of the same selfishness as unworthy of the Christianity, as it is discreditable to the good sense of our times. Can any man reasonably believe that the safety of any of the great interests of the nation will be compromised by the formal and proper recognition of that increased power and intelligence of the working classes, which is one of the great facts of the day? Nay, if the safety of our national institutions is endangered at all, it is rather by the jealous exclusion from political rights of those who constitute a great portion of our national strength, whose industry has contributed so materially to raise our country to the proud position which she holds, and who, with their sharpened faculties and increased knowledge, cannot be expected long to acquiesce in a state of things which they feel to be dishonouring and unjust to their order.

We shall not attempt to discuss the merits of the different portions of the Government scheme. It is, unquestionably, capable of improvement. We should be glad ourselves to see an educational franchise introduced, if we could see any feasible plan by which it can be made practicable. The process both of disfranchisement and enfranchisement might be carried much further than is at present proposed; and we doubt very much whether the plan of grouping is likely to answer, even if considerably modified; but the scheme is an honest one, and little deserves the criticism which it has received in various quarters. Of the manliness, ability, and spirit with which Mr. Gladstone has conducted his measure, it would be impossible to speak too highly; and it appears all the more admirable when we contrast it with the conduct of some who profess to be members of the party which he leads. We do not here refer to the original Adullamites, as Lord Elcho called them. It was to be expected that after the death of Lord Palmerston, many whose Liberalism consisted mainly in personal loyalty to him, would secede from the ranks of those with whom they had little real sympathy; and it would be absurd to declaim severely about them. Of Mr. Lowe, in particular, we are unwilling to speak harshly. We cannot forget his eminent services at the head of the Educational Board, and can almost condone some of his recent escapades for the sake of the heavy blows he struck at that new ecclesiastical monopoly which the bishops and clergy were seeking to establish; but we cannot regard him as a Liberal. The brilliant orator who has employed all the keenness of his wit, and all the force of his glowing rhetoric for the purpose of assailing the people, who seeks vigorously to uphold a system of class legislation, and who lays down principles, which, if fairly carried out, would conduct to absolute despotism, may,

in consequence of his enlightened views, support what are called Liberal measures, just as any clever despot might; but he is in no true sense a Liberal. There are others, however, whose loyalty to their party is above suspicion, who have, for the sake of ventilating, some little crotchets of their own, materially complicated the difficulties of the crisis, and increased the anxiety of their leader. It is impossible that any party can exist, if its members in a great struggle, such as that through which we are passing, are ready at any moment to allow themselves to be made the cat's-paws of their opponents, and to urge their own individual views to the injury and possible discomfiture of those with whom they profess to act. Against all this Mr. Gladstone had to contend; but he may be well assured that there are those outside Parliament who appreciate his earnestness, and feel thankful that the Liberal party has at last found a leader who has fixed convictions, and is prepared to sacrifice office, rather than to abandon or compromise them. Nor can we doubt that his predictions will be accomplished, and that he will yet live to see his trials crowned with the success he desires and anticipates.

[NOTE.—The above was in type prior to the division on Lord Dunkellin's motion, and while we write now, the result of that division on the position of the Ministry is unknown. Still, we do not see that there is anything in the course which events have taken to modify the opinions expressed in our article. The Ministry may resign, but it is sure to return with increased power.]

BRIEF NOTICES OF BOOKS.

"The Life and Light of Men." An Essay. By JOHN YOUNG, LL.D. (Edin.) London: Alexander Strahan. 1866.

DR. YOUNG, we presume, must now be ranked among those who are entitled by their years to take their seat in the gate. His name is mentioned with respect by all who, knowing it, are capable of appreciating the sterling worth of a devout and able Christian thinker, whose aim is truth, and who seeks it with becoming reverence, modesty, and earnestness. His previous works, "The Christ of History," "Evil and Good: the Mystery of the Universe," and "The Province of Reason," have placed him in one of the foremost ranks of modern religious writers. But the present volume, we expect, will compel more attention, and possibly arouse more feeling than his former contributions. It deserves a much longer notice than, unfortunately, we are able to give it. But we sincerely hope that Christian people, and especially Christian teachers, will carefully read and ponder

it. It is dedicated to the "Moderator, Ministers, and Elders of the United Presbyterian Church," from whom the author felt constrained to retire some years since, in consequence of having somewhat modified his views on certain doctrinal points. By way of indicating the purpose and spirit of the writer, we give a portion of the dedicatory Epistle:—

"Thoroughly at one with the churches called evangelical, in all that is really essential, I do not imagine that truth, and nothing but truth is with them, and only with them: that they are all right, and all others all wrong. Can it be deemed presumptuous to suppose that there may be errors in our evangelical teaching, and grave dangers to which these errors are likely to lead? And has there never been cause to condemn in our public action, as a party, manifest narrowness and bigotry, and still more—what has at least seemed to be disingenuousness and intolerance? But these and such things notwithstanding, the evidence to me is abundant that the divine spirit of Christianity is mightily working in the evangelical churches, and that the warmth and the living energy of true religion, piety towards God, and love towards man, and those holy central impulses which originate and sustain all the highest good that is done on earth, are to be found very largely in them.

"Fathers and brethren! I was baptized, admitted to the holy communion, trained and educated in that church, of which you are the acknowledged heads. I think I understand the evangelical faith as maintained by you, and especially what in these days is considered its leading testing article. I think I understand what is meant by the sacrifice of Christ, the atonement for sin (involving the idea of satisfaction to justice) through His blood. Certainly I am much to blame if I do not understand it. I have been most carefully instructed in it, from my earliest youth upward, in the family, from the pulpit, and from the chair of our Theological Hall. Its ground, its nature, its evidences, and its defences have long been familiar to me, and all my prepossessions, and prejudices, and associations, and circumstances national, educational, hereditary, ecclesiastical, and social, have been in favour of it. So far as an ordinary capacity can justify the claim, I may claim, without presumption, to understand this special tenet. I well know, besides, that by thousands of godly and devoted souls this is regarded as the very life of their life, the ground of their well-being, and the one solitary hope of the whole world; a protecting shield also, thrown around the Almighty Himself, and a sun which pours its glory on His perfections and His nature. They believe that from this source peace is shed into their hearts; that by this the sacred fire is supplied, which kindles them to purity and love, to heroic daring and noble endurance; and that all their happiest thoughts of God, all their strongest motives to holy living, all their selectest moments of spiritual communion, and all their clearest visions of the eternal future, are derived from this. Were this to go, they believe that everything valuable and essential would perish with it. I could not attempt to disturb, if such a thing were in my power, a faith like this, did I not believe as I do, that all which is really essential in the common con-

victions would abide untouched; that divine peace in the troubled heart of man would be even more secure; that the pure free grace of the Almighty, in the redemption of the world through our Lord Jesus Christ, away from all idea of human merit, would be more firmly established; that the impression of the mercy of God and of the dying love of the Redeemer of men, would be far deeper; and that all the motives to holy living, and all the purest influences of the cross on Calvary, would be multiplied and intensified."—(pp. 6—9.)

To this we add an extract from the Preface:—

"It is common in these days to speak, not respectfully, of human creeds as such. They have had a long trial, sufficient, it is thought, to demonstrate what they are good for, and to make it now full time to decide conclusively whether the amount of good outweighs the necessary attendant evil. Instead of servants ministering to the general convenience, and to the ready, accurate, and economical arrangement of knowledge and of thought, the creeds, some allege, have grown into tyrants, wielding a sceptre of iron, sometimes glowing with furnace heat. Instead of adapting the creeds at successive periods to an advancing elevation and expansion of thought, it is conceived that the vain effort has been made to adjust the ever-growing mind of the world to their unchanged bulk and shape, just as if in a library with its fixed lines of shelves, instead of altering the shelves to the size of the books, we should cut down the books to the measure of the shelves.

"But the evangelical creed is not a thing to be named without deep respect, whether for its intrinsic character, or for the purposes it has served as a spiritual influence on the nations of Europe, and as a large educator of the popular mind. It has undoubtedly gained, and it has long preserved, a real, a deep, and an extended sway. Several of its chief points have been effectually drilled into the minds of masses of the people, have moulded their thinking and coloured their speech, and in part created for them a new vocabulary. It is a product on which the intelligence, the learning, the acuteness, the organizing power, and the practical skill of many of the ablest and best endowed minds of Europe have been successively bestowed. It is unequalled for the vastness of its sweep. . . . It is a work of profound thought and of severe elaboration; it is based on hard, strong argument; it is constructed with rare logical ability and ingenuity, and will be found altogether most compact and skilfully arranged and consolidated. . . . Some of the most holy and honoured men, Augustin and Anselm, Luther and Calvin, and multitudes hardly less distinguished, Catholic doctors, and later Protestant divines, as well as Waldensian, Bohemian, French, British and other confessors, have had a share more or less in this great work. It is not the creation of one age or of one party, but a legacy handed down from all the ages, with their endless parties, almost every one having left its mark more or less distinctly upon it in its passage onward. Men of the most opposed opinions, some directly and others indirectly, have exercised an influence in its formation, and many who would not have accepted it as a whole, have nevertheless contributed to

some of its details. It is properly an agglomerate, unique but most composite, here venerable for Catholic antiquity, there purely Protestant, and again comparatively modern, receiving its latest modifications through Puritans, Covenanters, Methodists, and the various sections of the existing evangelical school.

"The attempt would be simply absurd to discuss a complex system within the limits of a small volume. But it may be possible, nevertheless, to discover and to examine carefully what constitutes, in these modern days, in the judgment of those who have adopted it, its central and vital distinction. Evangelical writers, preachers, and disciples, are in the habit, without exception, of narrowing the issue, and bringing the creed to a single test. That test is the doctrine of sacrifice; the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, the atonement made to God for human sin, the satisfaction rendered to Divine Justice by the shedding of Christ's blood. It is taught that Christ stood in the room of men, and endured the punishment which they deserved, and that God, on this ground—but only on this ground—is now able to set men free, and to receive them back to His favour. In modern evangelical speech this is the gospel, the true gospel, the one only gospel of God to the world; which accepting, a man is safe; which rejecting, he is eternally lost. That familiar phrase 'the gospel,' always in the same fixed sense, is so constantly pronounced from the press, from the pulpit, and in private society, that it is hardly possible to misapprehend it. Invariably one thing is meant, one thing chiefly, almost alone—the expiation of human sin by Christ's death, and the divine pardon purchased by this costly means.

"The following pages are devoted chiefly to a free consideration of this article, in several of its important bearings, and if there be found in them any closer approximation to truth, or any help to truth-seekers, the writer will have gained his best reward."—*Preface*, pp. 16-22.

We have chosen to let the author thus introduce himself; and, unable to do justice to the work in the brief space at our command, only add our testimony that the book is written in the spirit which the above extracts indicate, and combines earnest zeal, for what Dr. Young deems the truth, with the utmost fairness and tenderness towards those whose views of atonement he regards as unscriptural, and therefore more or less pernicious, though often qualified by genuine piety. For our own part, we think the arguments arrayed against the popular conceptions of the glorious self-sacrifice of our blessed Lord by such (otherwise) orthodox writers as McLeod Campbell, Dr. Bushnell, and Dr. Young, (who strenuously hold to the Incarnation) not to mention others, sufficient to make Christian men who wish to be found simple lovers of God's truth more than of human creeds to pause and reconsider the whole subject. At the same time, we confess that we are often far less thoroughly satisfied with the views offered in substitution than with the arguments in opposition. The explanation often seems to us to fail to cover the whole ground of apostolic affirmation. However, let all who still ask of the Father of Lights for further enlighten-

ment ever grasp firmly the distinction between a Scripture truth and a human *rationale* of it. Too many Christians confound their notions of a thing with the thing itself. That Christ died for our sins, that He died, the just for the unjust—died for the ungodly, was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification; and that, if we are walking in the light, the blood of Jesus Christ is cleansing us from all sin; all this, and all else that evangelists and apostles say, is, and must be true, and shall be firmly grasped by us till our latest breath. But “what meaneth the Apostle? How does the wonderful self-sacrifice produce all its blessed and everlasting results?” These and similar questions must equally be held to be legitimate; and we must neither let our own free thought be hindered, nor seek to hinder that of others. We are bound to commend Dr. Young’s volume very cordially to our readers.

The Way to Rest: Results of a Life-Search after Religious Truth.
By ROBERT VAUGHAN, D.D. London: Longmans, Green, & Co.
1866.

WE remember Dr. Vaughan, by repute, at least, from our boyhood, long before he established the *British Quarterly Review*, and through the many many years that have intervened we have learned to think of him with a respect that is mellowed by all kindly feelings and tender sympathy. And was not the gifted author of “Hours with the Mystics” his son?

And now when the almond tree is flourishing, but before the grasshopper is a burden, we hope, and while yet the days have not come when he shall say, “I have no pleasure in them,” the venerable preacher and writer, being wise and good, still seeks to teach the people knowledge. And surely the ripest thoughts of an accomplished Christian scholar and divine, dropping from him as fruit from the tree in autumn, are to be received with a respectful welcome.

“The word REST in connection with this volume,” he tells us, “is used in the sense of settledness of belief. Such rest is good; not that the mind may be free to luxuriate, but that it may be prompted to action. The relation is intimate between firm religious faith and steady religious effort. I would strengthen the conviction of my readers, and minister to their peace by disposing them to usefulness.

“Little reference is made to books in the following pages. The work is addressed to thoughtful enquirers, not to polemics. My aim has been to establish principles. I have no controversy with persons.”
—*Preface.*

The contents, in nine sections, are, Man in his Moral Relations; Revelation—the Old Testament; the New Testament; Inspiration; the Incarnation; the Atonement; Pardon and Justification; Spiritual Influences; and Church Authority.

These subjects are treated—as those who know Dr. Vaughan would anticipate—thoughtfully, carefully, and with a calmly firm hand. The estimable author is not unaware of modern phases of thought, but still the trumpet gives no uncertain sound. We are sure the volume will be generally esteemed by the more educated and liberal portion of

the nevertheless decidedly evangelical community as eminently judicious and satisfactory, perhaps the most judicious and satisfactory to which they could refer an intelligent inquirer for a reason of the hope which is in them. We greatly admire the spirit in which it is all written, and think very highly of some portions of it. On the now crucial subject of Atonement, we confess we should have been thankful if it had been given to our venerable friend to cast some additional light, to see the cross as such a one as Paul the aged saw it, before yet the mists of systematic theology had gathered round it, making it often loom somewhat hazy and unreal. If there be one spot above all others in God's universe where legal or other fictions have no place, we are sure that spot is the hill Calvary. The profoundest realities of heaven, the deepest mysteries of divine love, are not illuminated, we think, by references to our poor human law courts and forensic theories, however guarded. But let us not be misunderstood to imply that Dr. Vaughan has not so far felt the influence of modern thought as to have done his best to present the forensic theory clear of many of the crudities that have unduly, but not unnaturally, repelled some of the less patient and candid from the grand verities of a true atonement. Indeed, we have the Doctor earnestly repudiating some of the very popular but very unthoughtful puttings. And we are glad to have him teaching that "the idea that we are saved by the mere amount of the pain and grief endured by Christ, is a false and mischievous conception of His work. It presents the Divine Being to our view under an aspect which, in place of being attractive, is revolting. He has no delight in suffering. He never chooses it for its own sake. *In Christ there was no portion of it, except as designed to bring into action the highest spiritual intelligence, and to realise the highest spiritual purpose.*"—p. 212. (The italics are ours.)

We shall place Dr. Vaughan's book on our shelves with deep respect and gratitude. It is a most valuable contribution, by a thoroughly competent and devout Christian thinker, to the wants of the present generation, and will endear the author to many a reader.

A Summer in Skye. By ALEXANDER SMITH; Author of "A Life Drama," &c. Popular Edition. London: Alexander Strahan. 1866.

MAKE a poet work at daily task-work all the year round like ordinary mortals, then, in merest justice, set him at happy liberty in the autumn for a couple of months, and let him start off to Skye. He may, being a thoughtful, observant, genial, and whole-hearted man, be able to suck honey out of the flinty rock, write you just such a pleasant, lively, instructive, gossiping book as Alexander Smith has here given us, creating strange longings in us forthwith to go to Skye for our own next outing.

We feel with him, in hot, worn, weary Edinburgh through the broiling smoking days of July.

"Moreover one is tired and jaded. The whole man, body and soul, like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh, is fagged with work, eaten up of impatience, and haunted with visions of vacation. One 'babbles o' green fields' like a very Falstaff, and the poor tired cars hum with sea-music like

a couple of sea-shells. At last it comes, the 1st of August, and then, like an arrow from a Tartar's bow, like a bird from its cage, like a lover to his mistress, one is off; and before the wild scarlets of sunset die on the northern sea, one is in the silence of the hills, those eternal sun-dials that tell the hours to the shepherd, and in one's nostrils is the smell of peat-reek, and in one's throat the flavour of usquebaugh. Then come long floating summer days, so silent the wilderness, that one can hear one's heart beat; then come long silent nights, the waves heard upon the shore, although that is a mile away, in which one snatches the 'fearful joy' of a ghost story, told by shepherd or fisher, who believes in it as in his own existence. Then one beholds sunset, not through the smoked glass of towns, but gloriously through the clearness of enkindled air. Then one makes acquaintance with sunrise, which, to the dweller in a city, who conforms to the usual proprieties, is about the rarest of this world's sights." P. 3.

"The Highlands can be enjoyed in the utmost simplicity; and the best preparations are—money to a moderate extent in one's pocket, a knapsack, containing a spare shirt, and a tooth-brush, and a courage that does not fear to breast the steep of the hill, and to encounter the pelting of a Highland shower. No man knows a country till he has walked through it: he then tastes the sweets and the bitters of it. He beholds its grand and important points, and all the subtler and concealed beauties that lie out of the beaten track. Then, O reader, in the most glorious of the months, the very crown and summit of the fruitful year, hanging in equal poise between summer and autumn, leave London or Edinburgh, or whatever city your lot may happen to be cast in, and accompany me on my wanderings. Our course will lead us by ancient battle-fields, by castles standing in hearing of the surge, by the bases of mighty mountains, along the wanderings of hollow glens; and, if the weather holds, we may see the keen ridges of Blaavin and the Cuchullin hills; listen to a legend as old as Ossian, while sitting on the broken stair of the Castle of Duntulm, beaten for centuries by the salt flake and the wind; and in the pauses of ghostly talk in the long autumn nights, when the rain is on the hills, we may hear—more wonderful than any legend, carrying you away to misty regions and half-forgotten times—the music which haunted the Berserkers of old, the thunder of the northern sea!" Pp. 6—7.

The Judgment Books. By ALEXANDER MACLEOD, D.D., Birkenhead. Edinburgh: Andrew Elliott.

THE author of this book is well known north of the Tweed as one of the most vigorous and eloquent preachers of the United Presbyterian Church. He deals in this volume with the solemn theme of Divine retribution—treating his subject, as the title indicates, in connection with the Apocalyptic symbol of the judgment books. The Book "sealed with seven seals," the "little Book open" in the hand of the angel, the "Books opened" in order that the dead may be judged, the "Book of Life" in which the names of the saved are found written—these symbols are regarded by Dr. Macleod as "organically related," and as "together constituting a four-fold symbol, which covers the entire area of retribution." He divides his treatise into five parts:—1. The Sealed Book, or the Book of Prelusive Judgment; 2. The Open Book, or the Book of the Judging Word; 3. Discipline, or Revelations of Wrath on the way of Life; 4. The Books, or the Memories of the Judged; 5. The Book of Life, or Book of the Names and Manifestations of the Sons; and an appendix is added on

Memory and Conscience. These titles indicate the author's method of dealing with his subject—the method of the orator rather than of the theologian. Although cast with graceful skill into the form of a treatise, the book is evidently enough, in substance, a volume of sermons; and to this fact its characteristic excellences and defects may alike be traced. There are not wanting indications that the author has failed to do justice to himself, though being fettered by those symbols around which he has gathered his illustrations. Had he confined himself less closely to the figure of the "Books," his volume might have gained in logical consistency, philosophical breadth, and theological value, what it would have lost in mere rhetorical symmetry. As it is we detect here and there exaggerated and one-sided statements, and occasionally also faults of expression, which are traceable to this over-rhetorical method of dealing with a subject so complex. On the other hand we must acknowledge that the distinguishing excellences of the volume are also due to the fact that its author writes as a preacher rather than as a philosopher. The book is chiefly valuable for its stirring appeals to the imagination and conscience. An unmistakable and intense earnestness breathes throughout its pages. We could quote many a passage rich with genuine eloquence, and full of vigorous and masculine thought. There is, moreover, an individuality about the whole volume, which is all the more worthy of notice, inasmuch as the author has been even scrupulously careful to acknowledge his indebtedness to others; and although we differ from Dr. Macleod in some of his interpretations of Scripture, and believe that he takes too stern and dark a view of the Divine severity, yet we can cordially commend his book as calculated, by its freshness and power, to do good service in the cause of practical religion.

The Handbook of Specimens of English Literature, selected from the chief British authors, &c. By JOSEPH ANGUS, D.D., &c. Religious Tract Society.

THIS volume is meant as a sequel to the "Handbook of English Literature" by the same author, and admirably supplies a felt want. It gives tokens of patient diligent labour, which, however, was as evidently a labour of love. In the preparation of such a manual a considerable amount of earnest plodding painstaking, combined with a sound discriminating judgment and an intelligent honest love of literature would be imperatively demanded, and these qualities Dr. Angus has plainly brought to his task. Wishing to omit no writer, the specimens furnished are many of them unavoidably meagre, and, indeed, when we sometimes get but a single sentence as an illustration of a writer, or a verse of four lines to enable the student to form some idea of a poet, we scarcely know whether to be disappointed or amused. But, of course, if every contributor to English literature had to be at all adequately represented by quotation, Dr. Angus must have given us a library instead of a volume. We deliberately think that nothing better could have been produced in the same compass, and cordially recommend the book as a careful and reliable fulfilment of all that the title professes. It is a "Handbook of Specimens of English Literature,"

and, taken in connection with the former volume, may justly be characterized as abounding in help of the **very kind** that the student needs.

The Parables read in the Light of the Present Day. By THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D. London: Alexander Strahan. 1866.

WE know not that we need to add anything to the announcement of this volume. It is Dr. Guthrie's own from beginning to end; easy, pleasant, full of illustrative narrative or allusions, and abounding in proofs of the good-heartedness and geniality and honest purpose of this deservedly popular preacher. It is worse than folly to slight one good man because he is not a duplicate of another, or book because it has not all the qualities we value. The Spirit divideth to every man severally as He will; and it is given to Dr. Guthrie to take the generally accepted evangelicalism of the present day, and pleasantly commend it to the hearts and consciences of the present generation. To some things we might take exception on the score of want of accuracy in thinking, and to some on the score of questionable taste. For instance, we cannot profess to admire the mode of putting the truth adopted in the last clause of the following sentence:—"Yes. We can also say there is enough and to spare—for my needs, grace enough; for my sorrows, comfort enough; for my nakedness, raiment enough and to spare; in that *fountain filled from Immanuel's veins, blood enough* to wash away my sins, &c." But the worthy doctor, and many others, would, no doubt, deem us too fastidious.

The Workman and the Franchise: Chapters from English History on The Representation and Education of the People. By FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE, M.A. London: Alexander Strahan. 1866.

SEVEN lectures delivered in connection with the Working Men's College, and well deserving to be given to the public in the cheap form in which the enterprising publisher here presents them. The contents are—How the Roman, Saxon, and Norman times illustrate the words People, Citizen, Representation, Education, Commons, Freeholder, Freeman; the House of Commons from the reign of Henry III. to the reign of Henry VII.; the House of Commons in the Tudor period, in the Stuart period, in the eighteenth century, in the nineteenth; Manhood Suffrage and Money Suffrage.

Everybody knows how earnestly Mr. Maurice seeks to base all his teachings on first principles and the truth of God, and that his aim is to make all whom he can influence intelligent, earnest, loyal, and loving disciples of THE MASTER, and as such, valuable members of the Commonwealth. How he discourses on the above topics anyone may learn for himself at the cost of eighteenpence. For ourselves we cordially thank him for his effort.

Footsteps of a Prodigal, or Friendly Advice to Young Men. By WILLIAM G. PASCOE. London: Elliot Stock.

THIS little volume consists of Eight Sunday Evening Lectures on

the parable of the Prodigal Son, delivered to the author's congregation. The sermons are characterized by an obviously earnest desire to be useful to the class for whom they are intended, and are good respectable sermons of the kind that are ordinarily preached in Evangelical pulpits. We are often conscious of a wish that our popular preachers, who take up and repeat the common-places of the schools they belong to, would sometimes compel themselves to a little accurate thinking, and be content to be simply scriptural and evangelical, instead of ultra-evangelical. Mr. Pascoe says, "When a sinner is justified, *the robe of Christ's righteousness is thrown over him, the merits of the Saviour's sacrifice and death are, through faith, placed to his account, and he is relatively righteous in the sight of God.*" We know that this is a very common and a very popular mode of putting the truth; still it is not Scriptural, and is very thoroughly ultra-Pauline. We need not attempt to gild refined gold or paint the lily. The truth as it is in Jesus is quite evangelical enough.

We are happy to give Mr. Pascoe our cordial greeting as a fellow-helper whose labour, we feel sure, cannot be in vain in the Lord. Many a young man would be all the better for a loving acceptance of this genuine little volume.

Commentaries on Obadiah and Habakkuk. By EDWARD MARBURY. Nichol's Series, Puritan Period. Edinburgh: James Nichol.

EDWARD MARBURY was a "learned, grave, religious, and painful" minister of the Gospel in the city of London some two hundred years ago. Little is known of him beyond the fact that he was one of those clergymen who were "deprived" and reduced to poverty on account of their allegiance to the royal cause, a cause which they, Puritan in doctrinal and religious sympathies, as many of them were, would not abandon, although the living representative of their idea of divinely constituted monarchy was a graceless, thankless king. These commentaries, with their quaint and apt illustrations, glowing spiritual fervour, faithful exposition, vigorous and refreshing thoughts, and withal their old-fashioned theology, and antiquated and elaborate divisions and subdivisions, have long been scarce and expensive. Many will thank the editors and publisher for the substantial, well-printed, and cheap volume in which they are now given to the reader.

Echoes of Apostolical Teaching. By the late Reverend EDWARD BICKERSTETH. Edited by a daughter. London: John F. Shaw and Co.

THIS little volume has a singular origin. It consists of selections from the "Expositions" of the Epistles to the Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, given at morning family prayer by Mr. Bickersteth, and taken down by a member of his family. The expositions are practical and homiletical in character. They breathe the pious and earnest spirit of their author, and shew his familiarity with the sacred text. Private Christians will find the book helpful in the devotional reading of these Epistles.

The Contributions of Q. Q. By JANE TAYLOR. Thirteenth Edition. London : Jackson, Walford, and Hodder. 1866.

WHEN we were young, anything contributed by "Q. Q.," like good wine, needed no bush, and subsequently we came to regard Jane Taylor as one of the true benefactresses of our youth. We fancy that Christian parents wanting a thoroughly pleasant, wholesome, genial, and quickening book for their young folks, could not do better than put into their hands these "Contributions."

The House of Herod, or Judah's Sceptre Departing. Edinburgh : Inglis and Jack. 1866.

WE well remember how, in our early days, those Herods mentioned in the New Testament perplexed us (in those days we used a stronger word); and grateful indeed should we have been if such a simple, useful book as this, telling us all that is known about them, had been put into our hands. Perhaps we should have skipped the occasional moralizings, but they are not many and not long. The book deserves to be well circulated.

Lectures on the Reasons and Excuses given by Intelligent Mechanics for not going to Church. By EDWARD WHITE. Elliot Stock.

THESE five Lectures, by the former Editor of the "Christian Spectator," will only need to be mentioned to secure a large circulation, which our readers will be sure they well deserve. They ought to be read by all the members of all our congregations, and at once; and the price being but a penny each, we will hope that they may be circulated by thousands.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

A Treatise on Homiletics. By DANIEL P. KIDDER, D.D. *Ecclesia Dei.*

The Critical English Testament. Edited by Rev. W. L. BLACKLEY, M.A., and Rev. JAMES HAWES, M.A. Vol. I. The Gospels.

Passages from the Diary and Letters of Henry Craik, of Bristol. By W. ELFE TAYLOR. Introduction by Mr. GEORGE MÜLLER.

Commentary on St. Matthew's Gospel. By EUSTACE R. CONDER, M.A. *The Gentle Philosopher.*

PAMPHLETS AND MAGAZINES.

The Class and the Desk.

The Life and the Light; a Sermon, &c. By Rev. HENRY ALLON.

Two Sermons preached before the University of Cambridge. By W. CARUS, M.A.

What is the Truth? By Dr. JOHN THOMAS.

Letters to the Unitarians of England. By JOHN R. BEARD, D.D.

The Truth Seeker, for June.

Baptist Magazine.

The Church.

The Appeal.

THE CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR.

AUGUST, 1866.

THE ROUND TABLE.

CHAPTER VIII.

REMINISCENCE—SAD FORGETFULNESS—GLAD TO BE BACK AGAIN
—CADENTIA SIDERA.

WE left the happily re-united friends all standing in the parlour, where the gaze of the two "furriners" had been fixed on the portrait of "the Mayflower." Mechanically almost, they obeyed the summons of the faithful old domestic, which had been given in her own half-persuasive tone, with just the least possible dash perhaps of something a little more peremptory, only the peremptoriness was that which we all so willingly allow and yield to—the honest, affectionate, coaxing peremptoriness of a dear old "nurse" or "granny." And thus it had run:—

"Come, now, all on 'ee, and jest have a cup o' tea. I've a' bin an' made it all ready like. Do'ee come now, an' come at once, there's dear souls. Come! Lor, Muster Sydney, how 'ee be altered, sure-ly! Whatever do'ee wear a beard for? And the Cap'n, too? But, there—come along!" And the good creature stumping along, led the way into the sitting-room, where all that could be done extempore had been done to make the tea-table also utter its hospitable welcome.

But, oh, how those two men did look about the room when they were once more in it—the dear old familiar room. They knew every chair. It was the same table, too, on which "the things" were spread; aye, and the very same tea-service—on the

same tray. The sofa was the same comfortable old family sofa, that any body might throw himself down on without any scruple. There was the piano, too. Yes, the same "Broadwood" that once *she* used to improvise upon. The very ornaments on the mantel were the same as in those dear old days, now seeming to the heart at once so far off and yet so near. How often had Sydney filled that slender white vase, and the other delicate blue and gold one, with the more elegant grasses that *they* had gathered in a summer evening ramble. And the very carpet they were standing on was the same. How much there was that was still the same! But the very circumstance of all these comparatively insignificant things remaining unchanged only made what was missed send a sadder throb to the heart. Alas, the *things* about us remain, but the *persons*—the dear ones—where are they? There is the old chair; where is she that used to sit in it? Why, the very crochet-work on the sofa outlasts the pretty fingers that wrought it; and work-boxes and writing-desks and even the walking-stick will be found when those who used them have been long, long buried out of sight in the grave.

Edith sat down to the table. They almost looked to see another come in, and take her old place there, where now the daughter was sitting, and as a matter of course—already. They stole a glance at her, almost fearfully, lest if her eyes should meet theirs she might read the deep aching sense of loss they were increasingly made conscious of. For that room had been the scene of no end of happy meetings. It was the family room. What pleasant times the breakfast-hour used to be, when, in the spring and summer, the window was open, and the honey-suckle and the jasmine made the air fragrant. There Sydney had spent some of his most golden hours—oh, hours so golden, that, being gone, would it ever be possible for any more such to follow? The sunrise comes but once in a day. And there, too, three years ago last June, at breakfast-time, on that bright sunny summer morning, that dull heavy blow had fallen on him—that summons to the distant chamber where death was striving for the mastery and won—which, in its consequences, had sent him wandering over the world as if in quest of something, something he would never find again, however, on this side the grave. And now they four were together again. But only four, now. Oh, how terribly was the circle contracted! "Contracted!"—why not say at once—broken?

Mr. Langston looked a dozen years older, they thought. And it was not time that had made that change. No, surely; a more potent worker than he had done it. Time works wonders, but Death is a swifter worker than Time. And he from whose

doings elsewhere the two friends themselves had fled away, had been permitted to still some hearts here for ever, and to pierce through and through those whom he was enjoined to spare.

Sydney had not been sitting there long before the idea flashed into his mind, and rapidly deepened into a conviction, that his dear old friend must leave The Gables at all events, and, if possible, even the neighbourhood altogether. For, as he gazed on that beloved and honoured countenance, he was grieved at what the tell-tale lines seemed to reveal of still other disquiet, if not suffering indeed, than that which came to him from his great loss. He stole another look at Edith. He had left her only three years ago a light-hearted girl of seventeen or eighteen, whose laugh it was a happy thing to hear; and now she was a woman grown, pale and grave, the mistress of the sadly diminished household.

By-and-by there was a pause in the conversation; and having once begun, it seemed as if no one liked to break the silence, which presently began to be painfully deep and obvious. At length, after some minutes of unbroken stillness, Mr. Langston said, falteringly:—

“We had better name those we are all thinking of, and who—thank God—are still with us in the spirit.” And presently—“Ah!” he groaned, “only in spirit—whom we shall see no more in the flesh!—no more!”

He was right. While all of them were thinking and feeling the same things, and yet dreading to mention dear names once so familiar—dear household names once so fondly spoken, now to be read on tombstones, it was as if the cold grey stones themselves lay on every heart, and they were all getting colder and stiller, till it almost seemed as if Death had bethought himself to return, and was beginning to breathe on them.

But though Mr. Langston spoke falteringly, as I have said, and his voice fairly broke down as he repeated those terrible words “No more!” and at the word, and his quivering voice, it seemed as if the clouds would return again after the rain, yet the tears now were a relief to the overfraught and overstrained heart; and soon they were able to talk of the departed ones—those precious ones who had gone before into the Silent Land. And sometimes Mr. Langston, and sometimes Edith, told—as they had repeated over and over again to each other a hundred times—all those little incidents which affection never could weary of, as memory could never part with such sacred and precious treasures. Every loving word and tender little proof of love’s insight and foresight and tact and devotedness lived in the hearts of the bereaved. It was but a poor trivial outer-world sort of thing to say that the Mary of other days and the darlings that once made

the light of the home were buried in the old grave-yard. The true graves were in holier ground than comes of a bishop's ceremonial. They had been dug in the hearts that were left behind, and memory would ever keep them green. And Sydney could talk, and by-and-by calmly, of the great woe that had fallen on him three years ago, and the sense of which time and travel had only mellowed, not obliterated. But though in the days that were gone affection used always to give the tone to the utterance of the name, yet now each dear familiar name was mentioned with a reverent tenderness which seemed to leave the old affection, when all were living, far behind. Truly, though Death takes away with one hand, with the other he bestows. The dear God in whose hands both death and life are will not allow even the former to be an unmixed evil. And as the sainted names became once more familiar, the loved ones did not seem so very far away but that they might return. The connecting thread was rather attenuated than broken. And, gradually, the power of faith, the sense of immortality, the consciousness of all alike living in God, regained the ascendancy, and there—yes, even there, where vacant chairs were so sadly and sorrowfully recognized—something of the peace which passeth understanding was breathed into their souls.

Suddenly, Mr. Langston recollected his evening service, and starting up, and looking at his watch, found to his consternation that it was already considerably past the time; a circumstance which, however slight it may be in the estimation of the sympathizing reader, was quite sufficient to bring after it something or other that would be annoying. Martha, however, coming in at the moment, explained what her thoughtfulness had arranged, and how the "Home Missioner" had promised to conduct the service till he should arrive. Hearing which, and as it was now so late, the two friends begged him to remain, and "leave the good people to edify one another for once;" and, being more than somewhat inclined to yield to his feelings for a time, he resumed his seat. But only for a moment, for memory instantly brought forth sundry reasons—some of them not the most agreeable, perhaps, if we knew all—reasons, however, which changed his determination, and he went. This forgetfulness for a time of the Thursday evening service, in the surprise and delight of welcoming such dear friends, was subsequently made much of by some, and distorted and exaggerated till it became something very grave, and then, being saturated with the peculiar secretion which is naturally emitted by a class among us, was carefully treasured up for use another day.

Edith followed her father to the door with her eyes, and quite unconsciously heaved a deep sigh. For she had easily divined

his thoughts, and would have been glad to accompany him, that her affection might be a soothing presence. But how could she leave?

"Do you find us much changed, Miss Edith?" asked Mr. Graham—generally called the Captain, although he had left the service, and was not desirous of retaining his military title.

"Well," she replied, "it is indeed a change for you and Mr. Sydney to call me Miss Edith. It seems to put the old days so much farther off than I ever thought them."

"Edith!" said Mr. Sydney. She looked at him, and he continued, "Am I changed?"

"Your voice is deeper, I think;" she said, "and—and—"

"What else?" he asked.

"Well, you know," said she, with a smile, "you are no longer what father used sometimes laughingly to call you—his 'imbarbus Apollo.'"

"Apollo!" exclaimed the Captain, with a smile.

"Oh, but," said the young lady, "it was only for the sake of the adjective, you know, that he used to quote the phrase."

"Well, Edith," he answered tenderly, but gravely, "I have travelled over half the world since I sat at this table last, and dare say you may gradually discover many more changes in me than this darker complexion, and full brown beard. But I come back to you and your dear father, you see, as the bird to its nest, —as the wanderer to his home. Since the All-wise saw it good to destroy so suddenly all the hopes I once entertained of a dear home of my own, this has always, till quite recently, been the one to which my heart has instinctively turned."

"Till recently!" ejaculated Edith, almost unconsciously, with a little of the alarmed interrogative in her tone.

"Yes, Edith, 'till recently'—quite recently;" he said. "But as things have turned out, The Gables cannot be my home; no, nor may I find it at Bablyk-Hythe, even." And the Captain by his manner seemed to corroborate his friend's remark. The intimation, however, was by no means regretfully spoken, and yet somehow it smote heavily on the saddened heart of the young girl. For she had dreamed that when the two friends returned it would be "for good," and that in their grateful society her dear father would find much solace and refreshment; while Mr. Sydney had always been like a brother to her. And, indeed, so had the Captain, ever since he had fairly come into their inner circle. But what new disappointments were in store for them now? She had been looking forward so earnestly for their return, for the effect she trusted it would have on her father; and now, just as the cup is put to their lips, is it to be dashed away again? She will leave it, however—leave this, too, where

she has been painfully learning to carry and leave all her many troubles.

Mr. Sydney saw the shadow of an unseen cloud flitting over the fair young face, and in a second or two remembered the tone in which she had repeated his words, "till recently!" Presently he said—

"But, Edith, I am not going to be a wanderer again; nor homeless, either, I hope;" he added, cheerfully. "I have much to communicate by-and-by—not now; but nothing that will fill my friends with regret, I trust;—only make them wonder the more at the way in which the dear God often leads us. But come, let me go into the other room again, and look once more on her portrait."

"Not to night;" said the Captain, dissuasively.

"Yes, Graham, I can bear it. It will not excite a pang now. At the most it will but deepen a feeling which it is a luxury to indulge. And come, both of you;" he added, "I do not wish to monopolize it in solitude."

They stood once more before the picture of "the Mayflower," as she was named in that loving circle after what had seemed her premature removal.

After a long pause—

"Dear Marian!" said the Captain, softly, in a low tone.

Mr. Sydney said nothing. Only he extended his hand to his friend, and there seemed some strange bond of union between the two friends.

When Mr. Langston returned he found them all three standing before the picture;—but not sad—only very quiet. Mr. Sydney looked with the anxious searchfulness of a friend into his face when he entered the room, and thought he detected something like an effort to conceal some quite recent annoyance. He altogether unconsciously shivered as he closed the door and his eye embraced the three.

"Are you cold, papa?" asked Edith, tenderly. "Is the evening chilly, then? Will you have the fire lighted?"

"No, no, not cold, my child; I am only glad to find myself here again." And with another half shrug of the shoulders, half shiver, he seemed to throw off all that was without, and to give himself thankfully to the blessings God granted him within the dear circle of home. Ah, let us all thank God for the dear retreat of home! Would that we could oftener than we do shut its door on what disturbs us beyond.

Graham was the first, after a time, to propose a move, and voted for an adjournment to "the study." Whether to get over the first visit to it at once, or for what other reason, he did not say.

"Ah, this dear old sanctum!" said he, looking around. "Come, we must handsel it afresh to-night. We have brought you a splendid Turkish pipe from Constantinople, and such a mouth-piece! We must all smoke the pipe of peace together to-night, I am sure. That is if it won't be excluding Miss Edith—Edith," he said in a moment, remembering her recent notice of the prefix.

"Oh," said she, "Father enjoys his meerschaum now more than ever, and he looks so calm and tranquil—comparatively, at least—when the blue smoke is wreathing and curling about him, that I am always only too glad to be his pipe-bringer. Dear father!" she added, and bent down to him in his study chair, and kissed his pale brow, and sighed, as if she wished a kiss could smooth out some of those recently-come wrinkles which made her sad to look on, and his hair, too, so much greyer than it was only a year ago. But those tell-tale lines, when once made, seldom, if ever, get smoothed out any more. And Edith knew too well that not even a daughter's tenderest love was a charm potent enough for that.

But before they all gave themselves to the long, long chat which must crown the evening of this welcome day, it was natural that the old Bible should be brought out, and the blessed old custom be honoured.

"What shall I read, papa?" asked Edith, as her father pushed the book towards her. "The hundred and third Psalm?"

"Yes, my love; and then the gem of the psalter."

Softer than the evening star seemed the tempered light of the lamp, as it shone on the young girl's countenance as she bent her head over the blessed page. And a quietness, as out of heaven itself, fell on them all as, with the faithful domestic, they all knelt together there after so long a separation and so many deep experiences. Mr. Langston could pour out his full heart there, for all the kneelers were of one heart and one mind. And when he had at last said "Amen," the Captain forthwith began to pour out his gratitude; and when he concluded Sydney continued the strain. And how much this revealed to the once anxious mind of the minister it is not for me here to narrate. It must suffice to say that his younger friend had, in days gone by, passed through dark nights of wasting scepticism, and had struggled his way upward to the light so slowly and conscientiously—the more slowly, perhaps, because so conscientiously—that time was when the present hour would have seemed to himself for ever utterly impossible.

By-and-by, with Sydney seated at his ease on the sofa; Graham—for memory's sake, as he said—on the rug, with his legs doubled under him *à la Turque*; and Mr. Langston in his

study chair, and Edith on a low ottoman by his side with her work, the evening chat began. Sometimes one traveller, and sometimes the other, in full narrative. Classic lands—old historic cities—famous battle-fields—ruins—mountains—peoples—odd adventures—hair-breadth escapes—till they came to the East, and then the associations became chiefly religious. Mr. Langston had always felt a longing, at times almost irrepressible, to visit Egypt, and spend some time in the Desert, and go over the Holy Land foot by foot. And his friends had done it. And from their lips it all came to him as such a reality, although of course little could be added to the already published descriptions of accomplished travellers in the East.

"And so you have actually stood on Mount Sinai!"

"Actually. At least so far as the particular rock can be ascertained, or rather guessed at, with most probability. But of course one never can be quite sure; authorities differ so."

"That intrusion of the element of uncertainty must go far to diminish the effect, I should think;" observed Mr. Langston.

"No doubt," said the Captain. "And, indeed, I do not know that an intelligent well-read man, possessed of a vivid imagination, could not bring the whole scene of the giving of the Law quite as powerfully to his mind at home as on the spot, where all the accidents of the moment, and the associations of the journey—guides, camels, tents, provisions, arms, and the hoarse voices of the Arabs, &c.—come in to disturb, if not weaken rather than heighten the impression."

"But," suggested Sydney, "you leave out the effect of the very peculiar scenery—wild, savage even to grandeur, with the grassy waddeys, so much the more precious for the stern contrast all around. What a desolate sea of rocks!"

"Well," rejoined Graham, "I did not find myself so much assisted in the realization of Scripture as I had anticipated. What do you think? We actually met a party of English sportsmen shooting out there. And I wondered how long it would be before some English Company was boring a railway tunnel through the mountain."

"You remind me," said Mr. Langston, "of a striking picture I have seen of Mount Sinai, with a young English nobleman lounging in his tent, with a fowling-piece and some game lying beside him, and bottles of London stout, and a copy of the *Quarterly Review*."

"And no exaggeration, either," said the Captain. "Yet Sydney found it different with him, I believe. He strolled away from me and the guides; and for three or four hours we almost feared he was lost, or had slipped down some precipice."

He was better able than I to banish all that jarred with the old ideas of the spot."

"But when you came into the Holy Land itself?" put in Edith, inquiringly. "I, too, could give up Mount Sinai, and the grovelling low-minded hordes that longed to return to the land of their bondage and degradation, for the sake of the leeks and onions and the flesh-pots of Egypt. But—Nazareth—Jerusalem—and, I had almost said, above all, Bethany!"

"You left out Bethlehem, which is Ephreth," said her father, musingly, "where Jacob buried Rachel."

"Where *He* was born, shall we not rather say?" rejoined Sydney. "The birth must eclipse the death. The sunrise makes amends for the setting of any star."

Mr. Langston was silent for a moment; but said "Yes," almost mechanically, glad that his younger friend was able to find in the sunrise a compensation for the star that had faded in the light.

"And did you visit Macpelah?" he asked presently. "'There'—you know the touching words of the narrative—'there they buried Abraham, and Sarah his wife; and there they buried Isaac, and Rebekah his wife;' and there"—his voice faltered—"and there I buried Leah."

It would be unpardonable to inflict on the reader details so familiar to everybody as those of places for ever sacred to the Christian; and I shall, therefore, pass over the recital which was so thrillingly interesting to the listeners, chiefly because of the hold which the narrators had on their affections. But by-and-by Sydney said—

"For my own part, memorable as the visit to those sacred places will ever be to me, and much as they certainly yielded me, yet I never felt so vividly that it will never do for Christians to be eternally trying to reproduce the past. Much as the Christ of eighteen centuries ago was, and ever will be, to the world (or, should I say the Church?), the Christ of to-day is still more the Christ for us."

Mr. Langston looked at his young friend, and thought within himself, "Is this the Frank Sydney who once groped in such dense darkness of soul?" and then he said—

"The Christ of to-day the Christ for us, rather than the Christ of Judea?"

"Oh, yes," replied the other. "And don't assume a puzzled look, you dear old friend. Why, the thought is one of your own, after all; and you know that as well as I do. But, come, we'll have plenty of talk about all sorts of things, please God, now

we are once more brought together—never more to be sundered, I hope. But the clock has struck two! and—

‘————— suadentque cadentia sidera somnos.’

And if Edith, at all events, does not seek her couch, we shall have but pale cheeks to-morrow. So which is to be my apartment? for we have taken for granted, you see, that there would be no need to order beds at the inn.”

“Ah, we have plenty of room now,” replied his host.

Martha came in with candles.

“What, Martha, not in bed!” exclaimed her master; “why you should have gone to bed hours ago. I had no idea you were stopping up till this time.”

“Never mind me, sir. I’m so mortal glad as they’re come back again. I don’t want to goo to bed none, now. That’s what I don’t.”

Mr. Sydney followed the old domestic out of the room, and, detaining her outside, asked; “Where am I to sleep? Is the room where—where—she used to sleep when she was here occupied now?”

“Ah, I know whom you mean,” said the old domestic, tenderly. “They all took to callin’ her ‘the Mayflower,’ after they heerd of her death. And that’s what everybody calls her picture now. Well, let me see—where she used to sleep when she was here—”

“Aye, because, if that room is unoccupied, I should—”

“Oh, there’s been a deal o’ changin’ and changin’ about sen’ you went away, Muster Sydney, and sen’ my poor dear mistress died, after nursing the three children with that there awful disease, that we ’sposes she first of all giv’ em herself by her clothes; for you see she went a’ seein’ an’ a’ seein’ about that poor widder Barnes, as Mr. Kierney sold the very bed from under her, an’ she had it, and Missis must ha’ brought it, like; and then, last of all, she had it herself.” And the faithful old soul had recourse to her apron again. Then she resumed—

“Oh, but, dear me, I was forgettin’ what you asked me. Yes, there’ve been a deal o’ shittin’ about, I can tell ’ee. And now—yes—Miss Edith sleeps in that room as used to be Miss ——”

“Well, better so. Yes, every way better,” said Mr. Sydney.

I’m glad Miss Edith has that room now. Good night.”

CHAPTER IX.

SUNDAY EVENING CHAT—USING THE PROBE—VAGUE INTIMATIONS.

For a few days the re-united friends found enough in the past

and the present to occupy their thoughts and conversation; and, by something like tacit consent, all reference to the future was postponed for a time. Yet, every now and then, words escaped from Mr. Sydney which conveyed the impression that his mind was considerably occupied, and apparently with the formation of plans. He was sometimes lost in reverie; and when roused by some direct appeal, it was as though his spirit, hastily summoned, returned from afar. And at times he and his companion were absent for hours together; and at other times Mr. Sydney seemed bent on making the most of all his previous acquaintance with the members of Mr. Langston's congregation. On the Sunday he narrowly watched, as well as listened to, his friend, and quietly took more than one observation of men and things. His peculiar training and former employment had made him exceptionally skilful in noting and interpreting even the subtlest changes which come across the human countenance. And some things he observed, which would perhaps have escaped his notice had not friendship made him sensitive, confirmed suspicions that had been already aroused, and, at the same time encouraged him in a project that he had been for some weeks turning over in his mind. At supper, that evening, he purposely and tentatively expressed himself with some freedom on the obvious characteristics of two or three of the more prominent members of the congregation. But Mr. Langston made but little response, and tried to turn the subject, which was evidently one that did not add much to his peace or comfort. He was silent on those whose characters and manners Mr. Sydney chose so freely to pourtray; and earnestly mentioned others of his flock, whom he could always think of with satisfaction and pleasure, and who, he said, were the joy and rejoicing of his heart. Not a word of complaint could be extracted from him; but it was evident to the quick eye of friendship that some secret thorn in the flesh was being quietly endured.

"Don't you think, my friend," said Mr. Sydney, presently, "that you made a slight mistake in devoting yourself to the ministry among the Dissenters?"

"I am sure," replied the other, "that I was led by an unseen hand to give myself up to serve God in the Gospel of his Son."

"I have no doubt of that," said Sydney. "But could you not have devoted yourself to the propagation of divine truth, without exposing yourself to all that I am sure you must be exposed to, in close contact with such men as some of those you have about you?"

Mr. Langston smiled faintly; but the smile could hardly conceal a sigh which he sought to suppress, as he answered—

"Could we not contrive to serve God and our generation,

and yet so as that we should find life an easy stroll through pleasant lawns and flower-gardens, and lie down every night on a bed of roses? Is that your question, Sydney?"

"No; I know full well that work and warfare must test every man's mettle. But I have the notion that many a dissenting minister quite superfluously dooms himself to work in fires that God does not call him to, or to toil at making bricks, like Israel in Egypt, without straw. I have noticed some things to-day, even in the house of prayer, which, I confess, have filled me with disgust, if you will pardon my thus venturing to allude to them."

A flush came over the minister's brow, for he knew full well what the other alluded to, though he had hoped it had escaped all notice but his own.

"Circumstances at first led me among the Dissenters," he said, "as I think you know; and by-and-by conviction kept me among them. I could not conscientiously comply with all that is demanded of a clergyman in the Established Church; and, unless, therefore, I had felt at liberty to forego all exercise of the talent that my most valued friends judged to have been entrusted to me, it was a matter of course to do as I have done. I believe I came hither by the will of God; and therefore I have held the post assigned to me until now."

"And quite right," said the Captain, drawing himself up, and looking as if he were at the head of his company.

"That is, till he is relieved," replied Sydney, answering rather to the Captain's meaning than to his words. "But the will that appointed him may also authorize his abandoning the post he was previously ordered to hold."

"True; but that is not my case yet."

"What should you deem a sufficient intimation that duty itself allowed you to seek your discharge?—opposition?"

"What does the Captain say to that?" asked Mr. Langston, with a smile, which had something of his old energy in it.

"Oh," said the Captain, "I should die at my post, rather than yield it to any enemy."

"Well," said Mr. Langston, "you remember what the Apostle Paul says, 'I will tarry at Ephesus, for a great and effectual door is opened unto me; *and there are many adversaries.*'" Now, I do not concede that *I* have 'many adversaries,' if, indeed, any."

Mr. Sydney involuntarily let a sort of modified "Humph!" escape him, and presently added—

"Two or three '*friends*' then, perhaps, of a kind more trying

to have to do with than any fair and honourable foe could be." But he had no sooner said it than he was sorry. He was conscious of having ventured almost too far, and sought to get away from the point he had thus raised, by falling back on a little generalization :—

"Well, it is my firm conviction, from all I remember to have observed in many places before I left England, that numbers of dissenting ministers have their best energies distracted and wasted, and their best efforts nullified, by perhaps two or three men in a congregation, who, in any other society than a dissenting church would find their proper level, and be of no account whatever." And he mentioned several places whose history he appeared familiar with. Mr. Langston made no reply; and Edith contrived to turn the conversation into another channel.

"Mr. Sydney," she said, "we have not yet heard how it happened that you had returned to England some weeks before you cared to find out your old friends at The Gables. I am sure papa and I have waited for the explanation with exemplary patience."

"Ah, that explanation, my dear, will take some time to make," he replied; "and, to-night, it is already too late to enter on it. But one thing I can promise you, namely, that you will be quite convinced we came to you as soon as we possibly could, eh, Graham?"

The Captain confirmed his friend's statement; and then the latter said further; "And, though we are here now, we cannot possibly stay more than a few days longer at present. But—pray don't be alarmed," he added, as he saw a sad expression on the countenances of both father and daughter. "Don't be alarmed; everything is being ordered by a gracious Providence for the good of all of us together. To-morrow I will clear up the mystery, which, for the moment, seems to hang about the matter. Only let me add, that I do fervently hope I shall be allowed to minister to your peace and comfort as freely as if I were a son and a brother, for, indeed, so I hold myself."

M. RENAN AND THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.*

WE were prepared by his *Vie de Jésus*, to expect, as M. Renan's next effort, a grand assault upon the historical fact of

* *Les Apôtres*: par M. Renan. Paris: 1866.

the Resurrection. That grand effort has now been made, and we are in a position to see all that his genius and research can do in the way of proving it a fiction, set going in the first instance by Mary Magdalene, out of whom had been cast seven devils it was said, and therefore just the sort of person to imagine she saw the risen Jesus.

"The glory of the Resurrection belongs to Mary of Magdala. After Jesus, Mary did the most towards the founding of Christianity. The shadow created by the delicate senses of Magdalene hovers still over the world. Queen and patroness of idealists she knew better than anyone how to assert her dream and impose on all the holy vision of her passionately loving soul. Her great womanly assertion "He is risen" has been the foundation of the faith of humanity. Far from hence powerless reason! Do not go applying a cold analysis to this chef d'œuvre of idealism and of love. If wisdom gives up consoling this poor human race, betrayed by fate, let fond madness make the attempt. Where is the sage who has given to the world so much joy as the possessed Mary Magdalene?"

We who have been accustomed to consider the Resurrection as a sober fact, bound up in the same historical proof as the death and burial of Christ; who have felt it could be harmonized with the great lessons of the universe, and was a fitting point of convergence for all the previous and succeeding history of the world, and the starting point of all sure hope of a glorious immortality, may be considerably startled by the freshness and boldness of the attempt, and shaken out of our old quiet assurance. We may even consider the ingenious theory calls upon us to examine afresh the evidence on which we have so quietly rested, and to ascertain whether we have, after all, been deluded into soberly believing a mere legend as a well-established fact. And perhaps we had better just glance over this question a little again, and see if there is anything so very formidable in the naturalistic objections brought forward, and whether we may not have just as much love of truth and sober philosophy about us as our brilliant critic.

We gain nothing by depreciating the genius and power of M. Renan. Indeed, we are very ready to confess he is somewhat fascinating, generally brilliant, always ingenious; that he is learned, though certainly not weighty in argument; more than all, he is without bitterness or contempt. We do not like a bad tempered and sarcastic critic. But Renan is far from this. He can afford even to go into rhapsodies over believers in fiction. It might be a great strain upon any ordinary person to consider the whole of Christendom to be lying under a pure delusion as to the Resurrection and yet have no contempt for such a superstition. But there is this peculiarity about M. Renan; although there must be a quiet satisfaction within himself as to his own superiority in knowing the alleged fact to be a fiction, he yet has eulogies for

Christian disciples who cling to it as a fact, and even recommends continued adhesion to the Churches. He can look even with enthusiastic admiration and tenderness on the loving souls who imagined all sorts of things about the dead Christ, and were ready to invent, on the slenderest grounds, visions of their Lord in a glorified body.

It would be doing injustice to Renan if we thought his great object was to undermine the faith of Christians, and that he felt a pleasure in taunting them with their belief in a fiction. Quite otherwise, he holds it as a matter of calm criticism and historical research. To him it makes no difference in the way of feeling, whether the worms ate the body of Jesus, or the body saw no corruption; whether the world believes a fact or a fiction. Possibly he may feel the doctrine of the immortality of the soul to be the world's heritage just as much if Jesus did not rise, and we may emphatically disagree with him. But that is not the question. Apart from everything else, the fact of the Resurrection has no living significance for him. It gives him no hope; he can do without it. When he asserts it a mere legend it troubles him as little as if he had decided a wolf did not suckle Romulus and Remus. To find out that the Christian Church has been building upon a phantom through eighteen centuries does not cost him a pang. He has literally nothing to do with feelings or with results. The tremendous consequences to the world of deciding that the Resurrection of Christ is a mere legend, or simply "the triumph of an idea over the reality," cannot even make him hesitate and reconsider his verdict. What would be unspeakable agony and the failure of all hope to such a man as Paul is a matter of utter indifference to Renan. But the principles with which he starts ignore all sensitiveness to consequences. Well, really and truly, research after truth ought not to be swerved from its object by mere sentiment and the thought of painful results; and yet it is simply faulty criticism to give no place to a consideration of consequences. The instincts and hopes of a world may after all go a long way in proof of what otherwise might be supposed to be fiction. If faith in the Resurrection of Christ has produced splendid fruit, that may indicate the tree is good and the root sound. It is good criticism "a tree is known by its fruit." A mere fiction cannot bless mankind. The instincts of mankind for a time may cling to rotten hopes, but they neither create nor rest in such a fiction for eighteen centuries. And so a research into the character and consequences and continuance of a belief may after all have its proportionate and legitimate influence in coming to a right conclusion about the alleged fact. We cannot therefore endorse Renan's canon of criticism as good. "These works ought to be

executed with a supreme indifference, as if one wrote for a desert planet."

If it is a matter of no moment or results which way it is decided by Renan, there may be, after all, no special anxiety or hard wrestling to discover the truth in spite of doubts. Where it is life or death to a man, the intensity of the search may be perhaps after all superior to Renan's, and the strictness of examination greater. Believers in the Resurrection do not wish to keep hold of it as a fact if it is a legend. It is not a question of mere detail, of which some particulars may be true and others false. It is either true that Jesus Christ rose from the dead or that he did not. If he did not, let us not cling to the history and say it is a splendid fiction, answering to the instincts of humanity and it will do as much good as if it were true. We fearlessly accept the Apostle Paul's conclusion:—"If no resurrection of Christ then no resurrection; if no resurrection for us, no freedom from sin; then the same end for the sensual man as for him who has lived a pure and self-sacrificing life: let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." All this struggling and striving agony, the putting away of rest for the time in the blessed hope of a joyful resurrection, why go on with it? We do not wish to be drawn away from sin by a splendid fiction. Is it so much more dreadful after all to die in our sins than to be dragged from them by a lie?

The miracle of the Resurrection is not denied by Renan on metaphysical grounds. He does not therefore declare a miracle impossible, but he rejects it in common with all miracles on historical grounds; or rather what he calls an absolute rule of historical criticism.

"Now one absolute rule of criticism is not to give place in historical recital to miraculous circumstances. That is not the consequence of a metaphysical system. It is simply a matter of observation. No one has ever established facts of this kind. All pretended miraculous facts which one has studied near at hand resolve themselves into illusion or imposture. If a single miracle was proved we could not reject as a whole all those in ancient histories; for after all in admitting that a very great number of these last were false one might believe that certain were true. But it is not so. All miracles which are debatable disappear. Are we not authorized in concluding from that, that the miracles which are removed from us by ages, and about which there are no means of establishing a contradictory debate, are also without reality? In other words, there is only a miracle where one believes in it. That which makes the supernatural is faith. Catholicism which pretends that the miraculous is not yet extinguished in its bosom, undergoes itself the influence of this law. Miracles which it pretends to work do not take place in the neighbourhood where they are required. When we have means so simple of proof why not make use of them in open day? A miracle at Paris before competent *savans* would put an end to all doubts. But, alas! that is what never happens. Never has a miracle taken place before the public whom it would be necessary to

convert, I mean before the incredulous. The condition of a miracle is the credulity of the witness. No miracle has been produced before those who would have been able to discuss and criticize it."

Now, surely, it can be no good argument to say, because the alleged miracles of the Catholic Church of this 19th century will not bear investigation, therefore all alleged miracles are false, or at least have no claim to notice. This is to reject all historical evidence. Nor can it be wise and thoughtful criticism which says "Come forth and work a miracle before scientific men in open day." Such a demand is contrary to all Christian teaching about miracles. Miracles most certainly were not intended to convert learned sceptics and scientific men. It is contrary to all wisdom to demand or expect a miracle out of place, or to demand one at all. We know how Christ met such a demand with a direct denial. The place of the miraculous in the order of the Christian economy was not to convert but rather to reveal, on the ground that "acts speak louder than words." There can be no doubt such a miracle as raising Lazarus, for instance, was not wrought for the sake of convincing stubborn Jews as to the miraculous power of Christ; not even for the sake of Lazarus, to bring him back to die again. We are more likely to find the reason in the deeper spiritual need of those who were present, and in the truths it could teach to the whole community who came to hear of it, and to the Church which, through the ages, has received it.

To be consistent, whilst excluding the miraculous element altogether from history, because he cannot prove a modern miracle, Renan ought to say, shew us a Christ in Paris before competent learned men and we will believe there was such a being eighteen centuries ago. But he admits that miracle, the production of a man quite unique in the history of the ages, then why not admit the miracle—the fitting resurrection of such a being? Find any fitting epoch in the world, or any sufficient necessity for a miracle, and a miracle is no longer so unnatural that it must be excluded from all history. We contend that epoch was exceptional enough, grand enough even on historical grounds. Why should conscientious historians think the Resurrection more wonderful than the character of Christ and his power over human nature?

But it is strangely arbitrary to say no miracle has ever been produced before those who would have been able to discuss and criticize it. Then Paul and the Apostles were either unable to discuss or criticize; or, having well considered the fact, were false witnesses. And this seems to be the position which Paul deliberately took up. "There is abundance of evidence, the evidence I have just detailed; we have soberly considered it, and live

or die by it; we have given up all to go forth and declare it. If then no resurrection of Christ, we are simply false witnesses; not mistaken, but false." Paul surely was as competent to examine for himself and discuss the evidence for the miracle as any clear-headed man of that day or since. We do not find him proving the fact metaphysically. The historical evidence on which Renan wishes it to be judged is just the evidence he details, and from the evidence he produces and which he expects will satisfy the Corinthians, there is no miracle which has such an abundance of historical evidence. It would be hard to say how much historical proof would satisfy Renan. What would satisfy ordinary scholars might not satisfy him. Evidently what satisfied men best able to judge in the first century—what has satisfied the great majority of eminent scholars in all the centuries—does not satisfy him. If a miracle were actually to be performed before Renan, that might not satisfy other historians or scientific men. We have had proof of that, within the last few months, in a correspondence between Professors Huxley and Tyndall. The former wrote "If my friend, Professor Tyndall, should tell me to-morrow that by a word he could make a stone fall upwards, or cause the Record to speak with decency and fairness of (say) the Bishop of Oxford, I should feel bound at least to suspend my judgment until such time as the matter could be fully investigated. Such is my position with regard to all miraculous occurrences." Professor Tyndall replied at once, "It is not often that I find myself unable to reciprocate the sentiments of my eminent friend. But on the present occasion I feel bound to say, that were he to confide to me the statement of his ability to reverse by a word the action of gravity, my judgment regarding him would find most mournful expression in the line:—

'O what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!'"

Really Renan's position comes to this—every miracle would have to be proved to the satisfaction of every individual scientific man, and a miracle would have to be repeated every succeeding generation, or the men (say) of the twentieth century might consider the historical evidence sufficient in the nineteenth to be insufficient for them.

So much for Renan's general denial. He has, however, to account for the historical statements about this special miracle, and his great theory, summed up pretty much in his own words, is this:—

"Death is so absurd a thing, when it strikes a man of genius, or a man with a great heart, the people do not believe in the possibility of such an error of nature. Heroes do not die . . . This adored master had filled

during some years the little world which pressed round him with joy and hope; would it consent to let him perish in the tomb? No, he had lived too much in those who surrounded him for them not to affirm after his death that he was living A penetrating man would have been able on the Saturday to announce that Jesus would live again. The little Christian society that day worked the real miracle, it raised Jesus in its heart by the intense love which it bore him. It decided that Jesus should not die. Love with these passionate souls was truly stronger than death. And as it is the property of passion to be communicative, to kindle like a torch a sentiment which resembles it and then propagate itself indefinitely, Jesus, in a sense, at the hour at which we have arrived is already raised again. Let only an insignificant material fact permit the belief that his body is no longer here below, and the dogma of the Resurrection will be founded for eternity." Pp. 3—6.

That "insignificant material fact" was, according to him, the disappearance of the body. That passionate torch which kindled the imagination of all the disciples one after another was the madly loving soul of Mary Magdalene. Simply, then, the Resurrection is a creation of the instincts and passions of the popular mind. But the strangeness of the fact is that the risen Lord appears to these very men who, according to Renan, are so ready to endorse a woman's assertion and invent the Resurrection, and upbraids them for their want of faith! It is simply untrue that there was this readiness to create the Resurrection. The words of those who had seen the Lord were considered as "idle tales" to those who had not seen him. The general tone of the records, though they may disagree in many particulars, agrees in testifying to this disinclination to believe the fact of the Resurrection. The whole history of the mission of the Apostles to Jews and Gentiles also testifies to the same unbelief. It is strange too that the instinct of man and the love of passionate souls should just at that time only in all the world's history have made up a legend of such a resurrection. Never in the history of the world before had it attempted it! Perhaps it is not saying much to say, never in succeeding times did it renew the attempt, inasmuch as it would be unnecessary after the One Resurrection. The instances brought forward by Renan are simply out of place, and utterly distinct from the unique fact of the Resurrection. The cases of Enoch and Elijah cannot be cited as resurrections, nor were the miracles of raising the dead attributed to Christ by the Evangelists—resurrections in the same significance as the Resurrection of Christ. Those miracles taught spiritual truths, and were evidences of the power of Christ over disease and death. They may have suggested to the thoughtful Jew that the death of the body is not after all so hopeless; but they could have been no evidence of a resurrection to a *future state*, as they were simply resurrections to a *mortal life*. And they would have lost all their rudimentary suggestions alto-

gether if, after Christ had raised them, he had allowed himself to rot in the grave. His resurrection was unique in the world's history, as it was no fabled apotheosis without death—no resumption of an earthly life—no separated existence of soul from body—but an assertion of power over the grave, and a transformation of a mortal life in a corruptible body into an incorruptible life in a glorified body. We simply deny that the disciples were wise enough at that time to create the idea of such a resurrection.

Besides, it is against all good criticism to conclude, because the instincts of man point in the direction of some such undefined fact, that, if the fact should ever take place and transcend the instinct in meaning and glory, it must necessarily be explained away as a human legend struggling into existence as an expression of the instinct. Why should it not, on the other hand, rather be an argument in favour of its being a real fact, that He who implanted the instinct as a prophecy of the coming event brought about the event to fulfil the instinct, and to answer to the great need and yearning of our nature? It is utterly unlikely an instinct would produce an event or fiction which would reveal higher truths than it had imagined. One of the greatest proofs of the Resurrection is just the wonderful revelation which comes forth to the world out of a thorough consideration of its meaning.

It is very remarkable how Renan, who attributes so much to the mere imagination of the disciples, draws upon his own imagination to account for the alleged appearance of Jesus. Indeed, the whole effect of a continuous reading of his criticisms goes to a belief that he must be superior in imaginative power to any of the disciples themselves, not excluding Mary Magdalene. The amazing fertility he shows in accounting on natural grounds for every supernatural incident—the remarkable suggestions he throws out about the mental weakness and moral sincerity of the disciples show that he himself must have an enormous amount of credulity mingled with his general incredulity; when a critic shows such remarkable powers of invention, and such an extraordinary belief in the theories of his own imagination, it may prove his ability for special pleading, but it scarcely argues that he will be a sober and accurate historian or a just critic. And that seems to us just the weakness of Renan. Whilst professing sober historical criticism, as if he were writing for a "desert planet," he can give play to his imagination, and transform "the man of sorrows, acquainted with grief," into a smiling, almost jovial, being, who spends delicious hours amongst the lilies of the field and the tender attentions of devoted women, intermingled with seasons of sublime teaching and disappointed

hopes. He can go into raptures over the devoted souls who conjure up phantoms in their pensive dreams about their beloved master visiting them after death, having, at the same time, a tender pity for their credulity, and a philosophical explanation for all their sober and passionate assertions of faith.

As an instance of his lively imagination there is this little fragment, occurring in a description of the supper at Emmaus—"How often at that moment had they not seen their well-beloved master forget the weight of the day in the abandon of joyous conversation, and, animated by some drops of a very noble wine, speak to them of the fruit of the vine which he would drink with them in the kingdom of his father."

Under the same sort of inventive power the breathing of the Spirit upon the disciples is dwindled down to a breath of wind passing over the faces of the assembly. The creaking of a window is made to strike the ear of the disciples as "Schalom," "Hail," or "Peace." A storm of thunder and lightning is sufficient to account for the descent of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. A hot wind, inflaming the eyes of Paul on his journey to Damascus—a stroke of the sun—a reactionary voice within him calling up the intolerance of his persecutions to his memory—these explain the accessories of the conversion of Paul. These, and such as these, are the sober imaginations of the dispassionate historian, who makes so much of the ardent imagination of the tender disciples.

"The insignificant material fact" of the disappearance of the body somewhat perplexes Renan. However, he has four hypotheses, either one of which he thinks may be true. One is that, in their hurry to bury Jesus before the approach of the Jewish sabbath, the disciples placed him in the nearest sepulchre, the grave of a stranger, who, not liking the liberty taken with his property, and having no sympathy with the friends of Jesus, made away with the body. Another supposition is that some of the disciples from Galilee, anxious to possess the body and carry it back with them to their own country, where Jesus had spent so much of his life, removed it and carried it away. Afterwards, when they came to hear of the rumour of the Resurrection, they were naturally surprised. But this did not lead to a claim from the disciples at Jerusalem upon the body; but, even if it had, this material difficulty would not have hindered the feeling about the Resurrection from developing and creating the fiction. Another supposition makes the Jews steal away the body for fear of a demonstration in the shape of a grand funeral or a splendid monument. A fourth supposition, inferring from the carefully folded grave clothes, is that the hand of devoted women must have had something to do with it.

"The five recitals of the visit of the women to the tomb are so confused and embarrassing that it is certainly very legitimate for us to suppose they hide some *malentendu*. The feminine conscience, dominated by passionate love, is capable of delusions most strange. Often it is the accomplice of its own dreams. In order to bring about this sort of incident considered marvellous, a person need not deceive deliberately; but everyone without thinking is led to connive. Mary Magdalene had been, according to the language of the times, 'possessed with seven devils.' It is necessary to take account in all this of the little precision of mind in Eastern women—of their utter want of education, and of the particular shade of their sincerity."

We have confined ourselves chiefly to a consideration of that part of Renan's book which refers to the miracle of the Resurrection, as it must be round this that the great struggle will take place between those who believe the hope of the world is in that Resurrection, and those who think they stand in quite as good a position even though Jesus with all His promises perished in the grave. To us, we confess, it is a matter of life and death to know whether such a being—after all His sublime revelations of God the Father, after all His grand assertions about His being the Life, and His power over Death and the Grave, after all His solemn statements that after three days He would rise again—did feebly succumb to Death, and in some hidden corner, where His stolen body had been placed, pass into corruption—or whether He who, we feel, represents humanity, after living the perfection of human life, bringing out its wonderful capabilities of self-sacrificing love, its noble power of triumphing over weakness and littleness and sin, and its lofty power of communion with the infinite Father, did assert that Death could not hold such a being, and that He, by virtue of that Divine power which raised Him, would also redeem us from the power of the Grave, and transform us into the same glory.

Give up the fact of the Resurrection of Christ, and we are left without any proof of a future state at all. Renan suggests the world has come into the heritage of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul through the Greek mind. But if we are thrown back simply upon that philosophy, we shall find no certainty; for, of the two greatest Greek philosophers, one, reasoning it out with subtle argument, step by step, came to the conclusion that, if there were, the same argument which went forward to prove the future life of the soul went backward to prove its eternity, and that any future life would have no consciousness of this present existence—as this present existence had none of a previous one. The other, making a splendid guess, based on his longings, tried to confirm his own mind and those of others by arguments which after all could not prove it, but only make it appear more likely. We desire something more than yearnings after it, or splendid guesses about it. There seems to be a sadness passing

over the mind of Renan as he gives up the Resurrection and Ascension and dismisses the Saviour. We feel as though his sense of loneliness in that case could not be otherwise than real.

"For us it is with sadness we say to Jesus the last adieu. To find him still living his life of shadow has been for us a great consolation. This second life of Jesus, pale image of the first, is still full of charm. Now, all perfume of him is lost—taken away upon his cloud to the right hand of his Father; he leaves us with men, and how heavy is the fall. O heaven! The reign of poesy has passed away. Mary Magdalene having retired into her little town, buried there her memories. In consequence of that eternal injustice which makes the man appropriate to himself alone the work in which the woman has had as much part as he, Cephas eclipses her and causes her to be forgotten. No more sermons upon the mountain; no more possessed ones healed; no more courtesans affected; no more these strange female fellow-labourers of the work of redemption which Jesus had not repulsed. The God has truly disappeared. The history of the Church will be the more often henceforth the history of treachery which the idea of Jesus will undergo. But, such as it is, this history is still a hymn to his glory. The words and the image of the illustrious Nazarene will remain in the midst of infinite miseries as a sublime ideal. We shall comprehend better how great he was when we shall have seen how little his disciples were."—P. 55.

The remainder of Renan's book traces the rise of the early Church, and its progress as far as the year 45 A.D.; its constitution, its social manners, its persecutions, its times of peace and interior development. It aims to account philosophically or historically for the ecclesiastical principles and practices, of course putting aside anything supernatural. There are, however, introduced here and there singularly beautiful descriptions of life and manners. M. Renan is certainly great in accessory information about contemporary history. Historically his description of life in some of the towns of Palestine and Syria, and his review of the state of the world in the middle of the first century, are of great value as bringing living pictures of the state of society in that day before the imagination. His vivid picture of life in Antioch is truly magnificent, and helps marvelously in any appreciation of what Christianity had to do as a power of redeeming society from its awful dissipation and degradation.

We thank M. Renan for his learning, for his charming style, for his graphic descriptions, for his unbounded charity; we cannot thank him for his excessive sentimentalism. He has considerably interested us, and we feel that he has increasingly convinced us, by the strange straining of his imagination, that the simplest and best thing to do is to cling more firmly to the straightforward historical assertion, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept."

S. B. B.

NOTES ON INSPIRATION.

I.—THE GENESIS OF A GOSPEL.

IT may, I think, be taken as a proof of our Lord's humility and of that divine grace which chooses base things before noble and weak things before strong—but chooses the weak only to make them strong, and the base only to ennoble them—that, as He Himself did not speak the pure Hebrew tongue but only a dialect of it, so also the Gospels, which reveal Him to us, are written, not in pure classical Greek, but in a provincial dialect of that exquisite language. Of all languages ever spoken Greek is the most flexible, copious, and perfect instrument of thought; it lends itself most easily to all artistic forms of literature. Of all languages extant nineteen centuries ago the Hebrew, refined by long use, was the best fitted for the expression of religious thought. Both these languages were pressed into the service of the truth. Christ and His Apostles spoke Hebrew; the Evangelists wrote Greek. But it is, beyond all doubt, a singular and striking fact that, just as the Lord Jesus spoke the Aramæan dialect of Hebrew, so His disciples wrote in the Hellenistic dialect of Greek. It may be regarded as a proof of the divine and gracious power of the gracious divine Spirit, that the most perfect music should be drawn from these imperfect instruments; that these two provincial dialects should be compelled to express the most choice and sublime conceptions ever given to the world.

It is the distinction of the first four verses of the Gospel of St. Luke, that, of all the verses in the New Testament, they most nearly approach to that pure classical Greek which was spoken in the schools and groves of Athens, and which still runs musically from the lips of her immortal orators and poets. Even in our English version of these verses, defective as it is in some respects, most readers may discover an elaborate stateliness which they do not find elsewhere; and, in the original, this distinctive feature is of course much more marked and obvious.

But the main peculiarity and value of these verses lie in the fact that they describe the genesis of a Gospel; that they teach us what St. Luke claimed for himself and for his narrative, and thus help us to correct some of the misconceptions which, for want of personal thought and examination, we have received by tradition from our fathers. For, indeed, our modern conception of what a Gospel must be is very unlike what St. Luke tells us

his Gospel is. Our notion of a Gospel, for the most part, is, that it is one of Four Narratives, each of them specially, if not literally, inspired, and intended for the teaching of the whole world; that there never were more than four; that there is no error in any one of them; that this immunity from error arises from the fact that each of the Evangelists, so far from being left to study his subject with accurate care and to base it on the best authorities, had every word he wrote suggested in some ineffable way by the Spirit of God, and could only pen such words as were thus given him from above; and that we possess each and all of the Gospels in the very form in which they left the inspired pens.

Now is not this the common Christian conception of the Gospels? Nay, if we omit that last clause about our having the very words the Evangelists wrote—for there has of late years been much talk current about lost manuscripts and various readings,—is not this the conception still held, even by the more educated and intelligent members of our Churches? To that conception, common as it is, I demur. I appeal from it to St. Luke's account of the origin and character of his Gospel—an appeal, surely, to which no exception can be taken, since Luke may fairly be supposed a higher authority on this subject than any, even the ablest, of modern dogmatists. Those who accept the verbal and mechanical theories of Inspiration should be the last to except to this appeal; though, when they see where it leads, they will probably be the first: for as they believe every word in the Bible to be infallibly inspired, they cannot, except at the cost of logic, deny the infallible inspiration of these four verses. Accepting St. Luke's Gospel, they cannot altogether reject St. Luke's own account of his Gospel.

His account, literally rendered, runs thus:—“*Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative of those things which are most surely believed among us, as they delivered them unto us who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and servants of THE WORD; it seemed good to me also, having traced down all things accurately from their source, to write to thee in order, O most excellent Theophilus;—that thou mightest clearly perceive the stability in those versions in which thou hast been catechized.*”

That we may catch the meaning of these verses, let us at once draw a helpful distinction between *the Gospel* and *the Gospels*. The Gospel was *before* the Gospels, and is, to a certain and very large extent, independent of them. For the very Gospel is “the good news” of salvation brought by Christ. Its first and most perfect utterance was in His life—of much of which we know nothing, and in His words—of which St. John supposes that “if they should be written every one, the whole world could not contain the books that should be written.” This glorious Gospel

of the blessed God in the life and speech of Christ was first revealed to those who companied with Jesus from the beginning, who were the eye-witnesses of His majesty, who heard the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth. *They* believed the Gospel before the Gospels were written.

When the Master sent them forth into all the world, it was this unwritten Gospel which they preached to every living creature. Their discourses, as we learn from the recorded addresses of Peter and Paul, were narratives of what Jesus did and said, and explanations of the way in which His life and words fitted, whether into the ancient prophecies or into the present needs of men. They went from city to city, proclaiming these good tidings, this redeeming Gospel, wherever they went. And everywhere they found willing credent hearers. Churches were founded in the broad rural districts, such as Lycaonia and Galatia, and in the great cities of Asia and Europe, such as Athens, Corinth, Rome, Antioch, Alexandria. As the Apostles passed from place to place, they necessarily left behind them infant communities, which had no other knowledge of Christ than that they had gathered during the brief sojourn of the Apostles among them. To some of them, indeed, the Apostles wrote letters, or despatched disciples fully acquainted with their doctrine, in order to instruct or confirm their faith. But for the most part, and by the necessity of the case, the Churches were left very much to themselves. Naturally, those who had been taught repeated as well as they could what they had heard the Apostles say. Many of them, fearing the treachery of memory, reduced their recollections to writing. These writings, or "versions," were read in the Churches. The new converts were "catechized" upon them—i. e., were asked to state facts in the life of Christ, or to repeat some of His words, and were encouraged to ask for explanations of such words or facts as they found hard to be understood. If any other "eye-witness and servant of The Word" chanced to pass that way, his words and his account of other facts in the Sacred Life were noted down and added to those already possessed; and thus these scattered "versions," defective and imperfect as they were, gradually assumed no small authority and importance. All this while, no one of the canonical Gospels had been written: the very first of these (Matthew's) was not published for more than twenty years after the Ascension of our Lord, and the last (John's) probably not till fifty years after—neither of them, therefore, was given to the world till most of the primitive Churches had been for some time established. During this interval the faithful were left to learn what they could from teachers who had talked with eye-witnesses of the Incarnate Word, and from such partial and divergent narratives of their testimony as had been written

down. So that many thousands of the earliest converts who had never seen a Gospel must nevertheless have died in the faith of the Gospel of Christ; and thousands on thousands of catechumens must have been admitted into the Church without knowing the very certainty, "the stability," of the versions in which they had been instructed.

All this is matter of Ecclesiastical History, and, history apart commends itself to our minds as the natural order of events, the order in which they must have transpired.

And now, mark how accurately it corresponds with the words of St. Luke. He tells us that "many had taken in hand to draw up a narrative of the things which were most surely believed" in the Church, and based their narratives on what they had heard from those who were "eye-witnesses and servants of The Word" who came and dwelt among us. He tells us that he had a friend, a certain Theophilus, who was a catechumen in one of the Churches—tradition makes him a member of the Church at Alexandria,—and who had been instructed in these narratives or versions, or in some of them; and that for the information of this friend, in order that the excellent Theophilus might know how much of truth there was in them, and learn even more than they could teach, he himself had been at the pains of tracing all the Christian facts and words accurately to their source, and of setting them forth in an orderly consecutive narrative. *This* is what Luke has to say for his work; this is absolutely all he claims for his Gospel—that he had special advantages for arriving at the exact truth, and that he had done his very best both to arrive at it and to set it forth in its due order and sequence.

This, though an inspired account, is to our modern ears a very strange account of the origin and motive of a Gospel—an account so strange that we need to look at it very carefully. Among the points worthy of special note are these:—

1. That St. Luke does not profess to be writing for the whole world, or the whole Church, but simply for the better instruction of a catechumen who chanced to be his personal friend. Luke is at the farthest remove from supposing either that his narrative is in any way essential to the existence and progress of the Gospel of Christ, or that it would become the text-book of the Church. He writes simply in the hope that a single friend may learn from his more orderly and accurate narrative what there was in the versions he had already studied—which could not be shaken, and how to arrange the facts they recorded in their due place and sequence. For, as we can easily conceive, the versions current in the several Churches would give very different reports of the same actions and words of Christ, would need therefore to be sifted and compared and harmonized; and the

full teaching of even the facts or words they correctly reported would not be brought out unless the most excellent catechumen learned to arrange them in their due chronological or spiritual order. So much as this St. Luke undertakes to do for his friend; so much, but no more. It is no part of his scheme to go into every detail of the Divine Life and Teaching; he simply purposes to collect and duly arrange "the things most surely believed." It does not enter into his plan to write a history for the world, but only to tell a story that shall be useful to his friend and patron.

2. A second fact to be noted is, that St. Luke, so far from affirming that there were only four Gospels, expressly asserts that even when he wrote there were *many*. "*Many* have taken in hand to draw up a narrative of these things which are most surely believed among us." And he is not here alluding to the *canonical* Gospels; for, first, there are only three of these besides his own, not many; and, secondly, St. John's Gospel was not written for many years after St. Luke's, and it is somewhat doubtful whether, had he known of St. Matthew's, he would have thought it necessary to write another; and, thirdly, the narratives or "versions" of which he speaks were not written by "eye-witnesses," such as the Apostles Matthew and John, but by those who had "received them *from* eye-witnesses and servants of the Word" made flesh. Nor is St. Luke alluding to the *apocryphal* Gospels, the fictitious, fabulous Lives of Christ which were forged in early times; for these were probably of a later date, and were very certainly never received by the Church as the basis for catechetical instruction. These "versions," on the contrary, would seem to have been artless sincere narratives, though necessarily brief and imperfect, jotted down from the lips of Apostles by the pastors and teachers of the primitive Churches, in order that they might keep in clear memory the sayings "delivered" to them, and that they might have some account of Christ to put into the hands of converts, who, according to the ancient and wise custom of the Church, came to be catechized as part of the common worship.

Nor, again, does St. Luke even hint any blame or disparagement of these "versions," or imply that they were at all less inspired than his own more copious and orderly narrative. On the contrary, he ranks his narrative with these versions.* He tells Theophilus that he is about to compile his history from the

* In the introduction to the Acts of the Apostles (Chap. i. v. 1), St. Luke refers to his Gospel as "the former treatise;" and the word here rendered "treatise" is the very Greek word which we render "versions" in the Dedication of his Gospel (Chap. i. v. 4.).

very sources from which they were drawn, *i. e.*, from the reports of the eye-witnesses and servants of The Word, of whom St. Luke does not profess to have been one. Because, he says, many others had taken such a work in hand, "it seemed good to *me also*" to do it; the word "*also*" indicating that he ranked himself with them, that he claimed no inspiration or authority denied to them. Theirs were very good and instructive narratives so far as they went; he will try to write a better, because a more full and consecutive narrative: and the effect of his narrative he supposes will be, not that Theophilus will despise the versions in which he had already been instructed, but that he will learn to read them more wisely and profitably, since he will now know "the very certainty"—literally, that which is so firm that it cannot be shaken—contained in them.

3. Let us also note what St. Luke does claim as the peculiar distinction of his Gospel. For if he claims no higher inspiration than his brethren the rural and civic pastors, if he assumes no superiority over them, he does claim, as his sole motive for adding his narrative to their versions, that, owing to certain advantages of education and intercourse, he can base his Gospel on a more accurate and profound research, and set it forth in a more orderly and finished form. St. Luke was a learned physician; he was the constant and beloved companion of St. Paul. The great Apostle could tell him much, and introduce him to those who could tell him more, of the life and teaching of Christ which the Evangelists and missionaries of the Word, in their brief visits to this Church or that, would be unable to recount; and the mental culture incident to his profession would fit "the beloved physician" to write in a more lucid and logical style than most of the pastors could attain. In short, he brought to the historic task a broader and more accurate knowledge, and gifts more highly trained than they possessed. In these advantages St. Luke found a duty and a call. Because he could give a more complete and finished narrative, he was bound to give and would give it, at least to Theophilus; and if it should prove worthy to live, doubtless it would live and help others as well as his friend. This, I repeat, is all that he claims for his Gospel. He has read many of the versions current in the Churches. He has been at the pains to trace the facts they narrate up to their source, and down again from their source to the versions in which he found them. He has compared version with version. He has corrected and supplemented them one by the other, and by the direct reports of the eye witnesses of The Word. And thus he has been enabled to compile a corrected and accurate narrative, to arrange the scattered facts and sayings in a sequence which renders them illustrative the one of the

other; by an attentive study of this new narrative Theophilus will arrive at "the very certainty" contained in the documents in which he had often been catechized. So far from saying, or implying, that he had an inspiration which warranted him in dispensing with anxious inquiry and research, an inspiration which, without study or effort on his part, presented him with the very facts as they occurred and the very words in which they were to be expressed, he distinctly asserts that the value of his narrative lies in the careful study and profound research he had bestowed upon it.

Of course, this account of the Gospel of St. Luke will cut many of our prejudices cruelly against the grain, but we dare not therefore refuse to accept it. In whatever sense we hold the New Testament to be inspired, we must admit the inspiration of the verses in which St. Luke describes the genesis of his Gospel, and the motives which induced him to write it. The Holy Ghost speaks to us through these words no less than through any other words which we confess to be of God. And if we hold a theory of inspiration which is inconsistent with the teaching of the inspired physician we have no alternative; we can only discard it; and the sooner we discard it the sooner we shall arrive at the truth for which we all seek and pray.

But perhaps some candid yet timid inquirer will say, "If I were to receive what seems to be the teaching of this passage of Holy Writ, I should be thrown upon a wide sea of doubt, with no steadfast light by which to direct my course. If there were many Gospels, and St. Luke's Gospel is only better than others because it is more accurate and complete, I really do not see how he could have been inspired at all. Do you mean, does *he* mean, that he was not inspired by the Holy Ghost?" Foolish man! If thou canst think no good thought, do no good deed, except as thou art moved by that Good Spirit "from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just words do proceed," how could St. Luke, unless moved by that gracious and heavenly compulsion, do so great a work as write a Gospel? The Evangelist who describes the Pentecostal effusion of the Holy Ghost and ascribes the whole subsequent life and work of the Church to the presence and influence of the Divine Spirit,—is he likely to forget that it is the self-same Spirit who guides him in his studies and researches? The conviction that he was guided by the Spirit of God, that he could only do his work accurately, laboriously, effectually as he was thus guided, is so habitual to him that he never once mentions it, but quietly assumes and takes it for granted. So far, therefore, from in any way detracting from the inspiration of the Gospel, I claim for it a double inspiration. The Gospel in the Life and Word of the Lord Jesus Christ was

infallibly inspired. Both He and It were without flaw or defect. And of the perfect Gospel of this Holy Redeeming Life many holy men were moved by the Holy Ghost to write narratives, some of which have perished, but four of which have been preserved by the good providence of God in order that we also may know the very certainty of the things in which we have been instructed.

These narratives are inspired then : but are they infallible ? I, for one, cannot affirm that they are. *That* would be to place the Evangelists on the level of Christ Himself, to say that, like Him, they received the Spirit without measure. Assuredly, as I will try to shew in a second chapter, they advance no claims to infallibility. There may be errors in their narratives, as the ablest and most devout critics say there are ; there may be contradictions. Let them be proved, and we will admit them. Yet the Gospel will be none the less true, none the less precious. For the Gospel in the Life of Christ is a perfect Gospel ; and as we look into the glasses held up to that Life by the four Evangelists, even though these be here and there dimmed by human breath, we can see *Him* clearly enough to know that our only hope and strength and consolation are in Him. These Gospels may be, as St. Luke says the Gospels of his day were, imperfect versions of the Perfect Life. What then ? The believers of his day found Christ in their Gospels ; and cannot we find Him in those which have come down to us ? Our faith does not depend on them, but on Him whom they reveal. We believe and are saved not by the Gospels according to St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John, but by the Gospel of Christ, the Great God and our Saviour. And therefore we may be at peace, whatever defects criticism may detect in the sacred narratives or allege against them. We need these narratives to help us to find Christ ; but having once found Him, we are independent of them ; we are on the rock from which no storm raised by critical science can sweep us into that restless sea of doubt which beats against the rock, and moans round it, but can never prevail against it.

LENNARD.

THEODORE PARKER.

"A GREAT man is never an accident. He comes at the end of a long series of causes, which get summed up in him. There is nothing miraculous in the origin of such a man ;—Von Humboldt

is possible only in Germany, and though he has lived in all the world, and talks and writes in many a tongue, yet the great features of his nationality are as plain in every book and letter he writes as his parent's likeness in his face. . . . When a great man comes, he affects men deeply and widely. He affects his own people and their thoughts for a time proportionate to his power, and the direction he gives it. When he dies, his character lives for him ; his ideas, his spirit, pass into the consciousness of the people, and continue there, a new force to create men like him." These words are Parker's ; and how suggestive they are of himself ! They were uttered, too, when he was as it were up to the shoulders in the grave, and vaguely expecting it to slope over him. To use his own words, he was "no accident,"—he came at the end of a long series of causes, by no means inscrutable. There is nothing miraculous in his greatness ; and over all the productions of his brain and pen there is cast the robust American colour. It must also be admitted, in the words of his own citation, that he has affected the minds of a certain class "widely and deeply." And now that the man, Theodore Parker, has ceased to live, his spirit has passed into and identified itself with the consciousness of a party, and is a force which, for good or evil, is "creating men," if not like him, men eminently anxious to imitate him. His name connects itself so intimately with certain forms of opinion, theological and polemical, that it becomes impersonal—for Parkerism defines, though rather ambiguously and perhaps ambitiously, one of the social and religious phases of American thought. Now that he has departed this life, and the smoke and dust of controversy and sectarian prejudice have subsided, it may be much safer to attempt to define what this thing is of which so much has been said both in praise and blame.

And, first, a few words as to the man himself. He is a singular instance of what the New England system of education was capable of producing, when it came into contact with a mind hungering and thirsting so eagerly after knowledge as Parker's. It is important to know and remember that he was the child of a Puritan ancestry—that he was baptized in an old "meeting-house" in Lexington,—and that he was the grandson of Captain John Parker, who commanded the militia at the memorable battle of "*Lexington Common*, where the first American blood shed for freedom has 'made the grass more green.'" The Captain's gun hung up in Theodore's study ; he took it down once, loaded and primed it, to defend Ellen Crafts from slave-hunters. These facts should not be forgotten, for they have a bearing upon some of his opinions, and on our opinions of him.

He was an example of all-conquering industry, for at an age

when other children were in their primary studies, he was reading Milton, picking berries and selling them at three cents a quart to buy "*Ainsworth's Dictionary*." He taught a school, and kept abreast with college classes at the same time. At twenty-one, it is said, he had read Virgil twenty times, and Horace nearly as often; had studied the natural sciences; and soon after had added the modern languages. When he was a student at the Theological School he was distinguished more for his devouring appetite for books than for any power of reproduction. His compositions were crude and often careless; his faculty for debate no way remarkable; and his manner was awkward and angular. But in industry he was a perfect phenomenon. Pointing one day to the library shelves, he said good-humouredly, and, it turned out, prophetically, "That is the way my books will appear labelled: THEO. PARKER: OPUSCULA." His library had 17,000 volumes—only 3,000 in English; and it is said that he knew all their contents even to the prefaces and foot-notes. His scholarship, though extending over an immense area, was shockingly inadequate in delicate details. He was apt in memory, but deficient in minute classification, or grouping of thought. His salient point was his industry. Accompanying this was his love of natural justice. It had more than a Puritanical vigour, and the revolutionary blood of his ancestors seemed to flow freely in his veins, and gave him no rest. His instincts led him to side with the weak against the strong—to do battle with the meanness that grinds the poor, that cheats a woman, that robbed the African of his earnings, or that despoiled the gentler sex of their chastity and virtue. Along with this he had a courage which few men possess. It demands a good deal of moral force, or what Mr. Kingsley would call "pluck," to stand up year by year and take the abuse of the press, and certain classes in society representing the wealth of the country, and calmly to allow one's name to be used as a by-word and a curse in churches, schools, colleges, and nurseries. All this Theodore Parker suffered. When most other preachers, on the question of slavery, prophesied for Baal, he cast off the fear of man, and pleaded for humanity. In the dark crisis which followed the repeal of the "*Missouri Compromise*," when, if ever, justice had a claim to be justified of her children, he spoke after the first and best men America could produce, and he uttered the bravest words of them all.

His temperament had imbibed a considerable degree of worm-wood by reason of so much antagonism with his fellow-men; but he never lost the erectness of his mind—never ceased, as he phrases it, "to be upright before God, and downright before man." A clerical friend, meeting him one day in Boston, said, "I've read

your Fast-day sermon, Mr. Parker, and want to speak the matter over with you." "That is the reason," said he, "why people here don't want to speak to me." "But you are looking very well; how do you bear all your buffetings?" "I don't know I had any buffetings," said he, serenely. They had come to pass by him as street noises, to which he had become accustomed. His sympathies were humane and strong. His morality was a lofty Puritanism. The moral rule which he applied to social rights and obligations, to the acquisition and use of property, to trade and bargaining, to temperance and chastity, to the treatment of pauperism—of the duties of the many to the few, of the strong to the weak, of the prosperous to the perishing—was what we would call eminently "Christian;" but then it ought to be added that he claimed this recognition of a moral rule as the result of his intuitive knowledge, instead of referring it to that Divine religion into which he was born and baptized. His honesty was sturdy as the oak, bending to no gales nor tempests, but planted firmly in his own individual convictions. He always said the thing he meant, sometimes in language studiously offensive. His partiality to Saxon idioms brought home his thought to men's familiar associations, and his unmeasured personalities, spiced largely with irony and caricature, held the attention of his audience where naked argument and pure reason would have failed to do it. Here Parker, if ever, was untrue to his better judgment. His intellect was keen and subtle, and bored into everything, determined to find the kernel if there was any. But it had no constructive power, and in its range was lateral and horizontal, and lacked both height and depth. He saw quickly through sham reasoning in other people, could prick all wind-bladders with the needle of his criticism and satire; hence, he was sharp in running down a falsehood, but impotent to establish a truth. In spite of his abundant nomenclature about consciousness, which he fleeced from Kant, few men probably ever lived with gifts like his who had less of "intuitive" reason. His mind flowered out plentifully in certain kinds of perception; but his attempts to grasp the transcendent truths of philosophy, religion, and ethics ended in failure. It is plain, also, that to balance such powers as he had there was needed a greater force of the imaginative element, better called by Sir William Hamilton the "representative" power, which assists faith to an open view of its own objective realities. His intellect was coloured chiefly by his tempestuous sensibilities. He had not the intuitive for intellectual sympathy, and hence he was unable to enter into another's beliefs, so as to understand them and estimate their origin, drift, and necessity. It was hard for him to believe that the professed advocates and believers in supernaturalism were

not either fools or knaves. In religious matters he never exercised the privilege of his nature, or the prerogative of his profession, viz., to look at the faith of others with a binocular vision. He could not see with both eyes at the same time. And it must be said, both in justice and in sorrow, that he, more than most men, thought with passion and reflected with prejudice. Hence his strange misrepresentations of his antagonists, and the perpetual misstating the essentials of the creeds of his opponents. The real argument for miracles he never either understood or examined, so as to give it anything like a complete statement, and he delighted in creating and demolishing straw images. The mere *text* of the Scripture, with all his immense industry, was not explored by him successfully, much less carefully. In exegesis he was miserably deficient, and as to its value, was not only defiantly ignorant but lamentably proud of his ignorance. The finer meanings, the interior contents, the charming exegetical significations of the Bible, were sealed from his sight with seven seals. Even much of its grand Orientalism was hidden from him. His mind was so exclusively made up of Anglo-Saxon sinew and brawn, that he saw little in the Word of God beyond the most rugged literalism, and its higher moral sublimity and beauty were lost to him.

He reads in the Divine Epopee of creation, and sees God working six days, and then "resting to get refreshed." He reads the narrative of the first Covenant, so wonderfully prophetic of the second, and only sees "God eating veal with Abraham!" He reads the Mosaic books, and stumbles and stops "at finding God trying to kill Moses in a tavern!" In Psalms xvii. 7., he finds the passage, "My reins instruct me in the night-season;" and then cites the text among his bristling foot-notes, to prove that the Hebrews believed the soul was seated in the bowels! The first three Gospels, admirable beyond all compositions of any age for the grandeur of Doric simplicity, he thought deficient in literary merit, while he admires the Apocalypse, which, judged from his own standard, and interpreted only in the letter, would violate the first rules of grammar, and defy all the canons of good taste. In the biography of Christ, he saw nothing but the story of an amiable young Hebrew, sinful and erring, but in advance of his age; he announces, as a discovery, that an Alexandrian Jew forged the Gospel of St. John!

His stores of learning lie in the dark, his facts are disjointed, and without historic integrity. He had no power to reproduce to himself another age in peaceful and uncoloured daylight like his own countrymen, Prescott and Irving, or like Sismondi and Heeren: he always dyes it blood-red in his feelings and opi-

nions. The love of nature in him was strong, and his power in the use of imagery great; but in the faculty which gives to reason its eyesight, he was totally blind; and this, as far as intellectual aptitude was concerned, determined and gave quality to all his beliefs and theories. To understand Parker's faults, we must know his system, for they were the inevitable fruits of it. In an ambitious article from the pen of Professor Cheetham, which appeared lately in the *Contemporary Review*, Mr. Parker is called the child and apostle of Unitarianism. Now, this is not only a hasty, but a most mischievous mistake; and Mr. Cheetham ought to have made himself better acquainted with the facts of the case. If, by Unitarianism, he meant what its fathers and founders understood by it, what the Church understood by it, what it was as transmitted from John Robinson—that was—a kind of consistent *Protestantism*; the Bible, *the only Creed*, and Jesus Christ, in a general sense, *the only Master*—then Mr. Parker was not only not the child of it, but flew directly in face of it, rejecting, with vehemence, its two fundamental propositions. Taking Unitarianism, however, as it has come to be held by some, Parker's system, we admit, is its legitimate fruit; for he only run it down into its last results. But, strictly speaking, Mr. Parker was not a Unitarian.

It has been set forth as an axiom of criticism, that the Bible is not itself a revelation, but only a human history of one. Its *text* is not inspired; it only contains an account of the doings and utterances of certain men, some of whom were inspired, and the others not. The thoughts came from God, provided they be true ones; and we must pick them out, as best we may. The idea of a WORD OF GOD, or God speaking to us now, is repudiated; and we have only the fallible history of men inspired some centuries ago. This is said by the critics; but we imagine that this is not the belief among the clergy and laity of any sect. Mr. Parker was not slow in perceiving what this led to, and hence he ran it into all its logical consequences. He saw that it threw out nearly the whole of the Old Testament, and reduced it to an equality with common literature. So he had the boldness to apply this method of criticism to the New Testament. The miracles he contended were the human additions. This brings Christ to a level with other men. Parker was not the man to stop short in his logic, or to build up sophism to avoid the fair results of his premises. As an inevitable consequence, the theory in his hands reduced the Bible to the same class as the Vedas, the Zend Avesta, the Koran, the Poems of Hesiod, and the Orpheic Hymns. He examines it from the same point of view; and from the very structure of his mind, he found a little wheat, and enormous heaps of tares.

After a most fascinating and subtle eulogy on the Bible's influence,* he hastens to find that most of the books which compose it are not genuine. St. John's Gospel and all save four of the Pauline Epistles, are probably forgeries. On the Old Testament he pours out all kind of scorn; the New Testament history he calls corrupt and unreliable; and all of the miracles figments of ignorant and credulous men. He had not the faculty to see their finer adjustments in the narrative, making it a living whole, as the lenses of the eye are so adjusted as to make a living organ of sight.

Having set aside all revelation from the Bible as of no authority, he proceeded to establish a religion from what he called the "Facts of the Universe." He meant by this, from Nature around, and the "Spontaneous Consciousness" within. This last gives three things he avowed: first, the intuition of the divine, or the consciousness that there is a God: second, the intuition of justice, or the consciousness that there is a moral law, which we ought to keep: thirdly, the intuition of immortality, or the consciousness that we shall live for ever. He goes on to distinguish between the *idea* of these things, which is *absolute*, and the *conception* of them, which is imperfect and transient; but he never seemed to suspect that what he innocently called his "*absolute idea*," may, after all, be nothing but a conception most feeble and inadequate. In his laboured development of these three fundamentals, the *idea* of God takes on no personality—no divine form that warms the heart, or searches it through, or melts it under the beams of divine love. Confessedly it "can present no image to the mind." The intuitive moral law has no retributive sanctions, no thunders of justice rolling along the future. The intuition of immortality has no pneumatology, no objective realities dawning on the faith, and turning it to vision. And so this *quasi* absolute religion, considered as a working practical force in the world, would no more act upon it and renew it, than the flimsiest web-work that was ever spun from the human brain.

No one who has studied the elements of this new rationalistic system can fail to see that there is much, yea everything, in it, to develope an enormous egotism. The "spontaneous consciousness," given under more favourable conditions, supersedes Jesus Christ, the "promising young Jew," and makes the sun, moon and stars of the spiritual universe revolve round Theodore Parker and his followers! Moreover, there is nothing in the system which hints at man's moral disorder. Hence Mr. Parker's habitual self-exaggerations, which followed him to his death,

* A Discourse of Matters pertaining to Religion."

and his total unconsciousness of the wants of man as a sinful creature. He saw plainly enough the disorders of the world outside ; the disorders of the world within his shadowy theology could neither penetrate nor disclose. He denounced wrong, but he knew of nothing that could cleanse away the sin which is the essence and cause of wrong thinking, wrong feeling, and wrong doing. His idea of God he finds by a dive into himself, and sees not a divine personality. It opens no deep springs of devotion in the soul. His sermons on the soul's normal delight in God, designed to recommend the piety of natural religion, run into the weakest and most girlish twaddle and sentimentalism. There is a God, but Mr. Parker can only heap together adjectives to describe his perfections, for he denies the Divine Incarnation and the "fulness of the Godhead bodily." There is a moral law ; but for its code and requirements we have only the sanction of "spontaneous consciousness," and that in South Carolina, sent women to the auction-block, in India to the funeral-pile. There is a life after death whose unmeasured inane the Indian may fill up with his hunting grounds, the naturalist with bodies from the graveyards, the metaphysician with his "entities," the poet with his mythologies, and the peasant with the ghosts of his imagination. Summed up, Parker's system, if we may call it system, announces that the truth outside the Bible floating in the "universal consciousness," is to be taken up and made into a "*universal*" religion ; errors and superstition, originating in and supported by the popular biblical Christianity, will scale off and be numbered among the mischiefs of the past. Humanity, out of its instinctive beliefs and intuitions, appropriating what is genuine and of permanent value from all the religions of the world, will create a new era, and from the confused traditions and perplexing elements of the imperfect present, carve the sublime image and structure of an alluring and a splendid future. Philosophy, science, culture, self-development, "harmonialism," will supersede Churches, vacate faiths, render unnecessary Bibles and Sabbaths, and make *reason* the supreme judge. All old things are to pass away, and all things are to become new. In Parker's pretensions we witness an after-birth of the materialism of the last century. A system which professes to reconstruct society on the observation of the laws and facts of the visible universe, which scoffs at all questions of inspiration and religious faith founded on Scripture, as insoluble and unworthy of human attention and credence, which affects to raise the banner of an affirming belief in "spontaneous consciousness," and "natural religion," at the moment when it avows its main characteristic to be a denial and a refusal to recognize the personal source of intelligence and goodness as the author of revelation, may well be left to the

silent oblivion to which by the force of its inherent power, it is rapidly approaching. Some of the pretensions of this system demand however examination and criticism, not so much because of their importance, but because of their seductiveness. Parker and his school appeal to the "spontaneous consciousness" and normal instincts of man as sufficient guarantees for his safety, and pledges of his future salvation. It is true that our instincts are not to be disregarded; that they play an important part in the redemption of man. But they vary in every man, and are seldom unanimous in respect to a moral code or a spiritual law. The instinct of a moral law lays on us a sense of duty and torments us with the Ought, but it certainly does not give us a perfect morality. Lycurgus made infanticide a duty; Plato recommends adultery in his modern republic. Instincts do not give us the vision of God or immortality: they only create yearnings and determinations towards these great truths: they are urgencies that excite us to search for the truth. They are the tokens of God's nearness; but they do not, because they cannot, give us the sublime realities of faith and life. A man may fancy that he can grasp all these things in the circle of his consciousness, and he may be able to spin theories around them, but they resemble the spider's gossamer, spun out of its own self. It is just here that Parker signalized his enormous incapacity to read the lesson of human nature correctly. Much that he tells us about God and righteousness, conscience and duty, is pretty and valid enough. But when he claims all this moral and spiritual light now so brightly shining in the world, as the product of the "spontaneous consciousness" we are hurried into doubt: and when he goes on to assert that great ideas, and divine impulses, true ideas of God and of love to man and his Maker, are natural to man, we are driven to a positive denial of his assumptions. Involuntary we picture Theodore Parker as he would have been had he been born and reared in the igloo of the Esquimaux, the kraal of the Kaffre, or the miserable mud-hut of the Fuegian; and we ask, what then would have been the ideas natural to him on the subjects of God, immortality, morality and conscience?

Mr. Parker was blinded by the fallacy that mistakes that which is proper and normal to the human constitution, for that which is native or inheres within it. Food is normal to the body; but hunger only is the innate susceptibility which declares it. The food is not born there; the body does not evolve it from itself by any of its various processes; it comes from without and must be supplied. In like manner the mind has its hunger, but it must have its food supplied. It cannot possibly make it. It can give soil and resting place for the seeds of Divine truth, but the seeds must be given.

Revelation is the medium through which these can be derived. No true spiritual ideas ever came to man in any other way, and never can. The eye can see, light being given, but keep back the light and total darkness ensues. The "spontaneous consciousness" to which Mr. Parker referred the "absolute ideas of God and immortality," is the consciousness of Christendom—not of Heathendom, and that, as every one knows, is not *spontaneous* but acquired; a consciousness which has received its nurture from, or been fed at the bosom of Christianity and revelation, or at least enlightened by information imported from sources leading directly or remotely to revelation. If the consciousness of Christendom had not been supplied by divine permission, it would have perished in inanition and starved to death, notwithstanding all Mr. Parker's laudation of its native capacities.

In Theodore Parker's system there are half truths standing so alone or so perverted, that they have no beneficial or constructive power. It is true, as before admitted, that all men have intuitive notions of spiritual and divine things, but then this is only half the truth. The intuitions and instincts which are inward drawings that bring us near the truth, are not an "inward eye" gazing on the truth and fronting its orb; they are not the vision of the truth. In an estate perfectly sinless, in the absence of all acquired or hereditary evil, these intuitions might become open vision, as in those days of ancient innocence when angels crowned, star-like, the tops of the mountains, and "warbled for heaven above and earth below strains suitable for both." Not so now. The instinct of God, if we are faithful to it, gives us yearnings toward Him. But that is all. The grand reality in its shape and substance is somewhere else than in instinct. Besides the instinct in the soul, there is another witness to call and answer to it,—the all-revealing Word, which unveils the very form and substance of truth, and confronts the reason with its glories. Each complements the other, and helps it on. God in the soul makes us yearn for him, and long to behold His face. God in His Word, clothed in personal attributes, and reflecting all the divine charms, to fill up the measure of the creature's love till it overflows. God in the soul, through instinct, makes us conscious of a moral law lying hard upon the conscience and tormenting us. God in His revelation, illumines this sense, clears it of mixture arising from passion and false thought, and enforces it with just penalties. God in the soul, makes us conscious of a nature which will survive the body, and looks upon death with scorn. God in His Word, opens the avenues that conduct into the "mysterious Beyond,"—that lead to the "tall white porches of Immortality." These two principles—instinct and revelation—are the appointed means for man's social, individual, and

humanitary redemption. To leave out either is like breaking one of the wheels of a steam-vessel in which we may be embarked, and then the ship, instead of going forward, whirls round and round "in endless maze:" the Church makes no progress without both witnesses. God in His Word only, and not in the soul also, becomes a tradition,—a doctrine, a lifeless authority. God as an instinct only, becomes a blind sentiment mixed up in perilous company with man's self-love, and the one is mistaken for the other. Mr. Parker insists upon the latter, and refuses to recognize the former,—in fact, he seems never to have reflected upon the wisdom of that sentence of Christ's, which is a complete exposition of this province of truth, "No man can come to Me, except the Father that hath sent Me draw him." These two,—the Father as Divine Love in the soul, drawing the heart, and the Son as the Eternal Word,—meeting it there with truth full-fronting the conscience, illumining our instinctive aspirings, giving sight to faith, and certainty to our guesses. It was hardly possible for Parker to escape the misfortune of obtaining his views as if by the process of refraction, and hence many of his ideas are distorted truths and misplaced verities. If his choice of religious faith was not swayed by interest, it was perverted by affection. By some twist in his intellect he affected to be satisfied with the *idea* of a God, who has no personality and who accommodates himself to no *form*. In this faith and feeling he was not alone or original. The thought of Divine Unity, as an absolute cause, was familiar to antiquity; the thought that Deity had no personality was entertained by the ancients and philosophers, but the unanimous verdict of history shows that it took no hold on the popular affections. Philosophers had conceived this Divine absolute Essence and Unity as purest action, unmixed with substance, form, or personality; as Fate holding the world in its invincible grasp; as Reason going forth to the work of Creation; as the Primal Source of all the archetypes according to which the world was fashioned; as boundless Power, careless of boundless existence; as the Infinite One, slumbering unconsciously in the Infinite All. He was held as a mere metaphysical abstraction,—loveless, lifeless, inane, of whom nothing could be affirmed personally. Nothing of this kind could take hold of the popular mind, or make

"Peor and Baalim
Forsake their temples dim,"

or throw down the altars of superstition. It is too late in the day for Parker's revamping of this cold doctrine to succeed. The heart cannot feed on sublimities and abstractions; it cannot be

comfortable with cold magnificence ; it cannot love and adore mere immensity !

It will have been seen that Theodore Parker represents the extreme rationalizing tendency of German theology. Naturalism under his graceful pen, and in his strong nervous style, is invested with a charm which is not its own. When viewed from any orthodox or scriptural stand-point, his system of divinity is cold and shallow, crude and inconclusive. When, however, we view him as a teacher of morals,—an earnest assertor of the freedom of the intellect, the liberty of the will,—the inculcator of a large public virtue and a whole-souled unsectarian philanthropy,—there is in him much which every honest and devout Christian will admire. And if in his intellectual system, or in his head, he represents the turning away from Christ, which has made philosophy for the last century so stony and lifeless, he not the less, at least upon his heart's sunny side, is influenced by that turning to Christ which is to redeem the world. His success as a preacher and author is not so much the result of his lean and empty views of Christian theology, as of a certain manly plain-spokenness and genial sympathy with all that belongs to man as man. His failure as preacher and author is owing, in great measure, to his being so intellectual and so sparingly spiritual. What, indeed, is the substance of his history but a shutting of the eye of faith, while opening that of knowledge ; a closing up of the mind to all finer and spiritual experience, while opening the intellect to grosser and more sensuous impressions ; letting in earth, and shutting out heaven ? And over this delectable process he sang hymns of praise and pæans of triumph. Of all the vital mistakes which it is possible for a rational being to make, that is the worst which closes the eye of the soul to the higher, and opens it only to the lower phenomena of the universe,—which accepts the facts of the material, and rejects the truth of the spiritual. Parker made intellect his God, and reason his divinity. He selected induction as his sole path to knowledge, and chose logic as his sole guide to truth. What has been the practice of the rationalists in the matter of Scripture and general questions of morality and science ? Has it not been a hammering out facts by the process of hasty experiment, and breaking up creeds and systems by the application of criticism ? Has the "*Novum Organum*" not been made the Old, and the "*Critique of Pure Reason*" the New Testament ? Perhaps nothing more clearly demonstrates the hopeless inadequacy of the Parker phase of rationalism, than the fact that it cannot absorb the higher developments of intellect with which it is contemporary,—that amidst the rush of life and the stupendous process of growth that characterize the entire temporal environ-

ment of modern times, German neology is insufficient to calm men's minds or encourage their prospects; now it gasps in a spasm of despair, and anon shakes in an ague fit of positive negation, affording to all unconcerned and unprejudiced spectators the melancholy spectacle of a system (supported by eminent names, great in individual talent and wisdom) laboriously expiring amidst its last convulsions. The voice of the age,—the collective experience of men, forbid its extension or its increase. The dominant creed of humanity demands more life, more hope, more geniality and diviner personality, a surer "word of prophecy," and a more reliable voice of revelation, than rationalism offers or can afford. With each successive year, a larger number of minds in each nation inquire into the ends and nature of man; and as truth and the laws of God are infinite, the more that engage in their study the greater will be the harvest. And of this we may be quite certain, that there can be no abiding place for that which is not eternally and universally true. Error is a convertible term with decay. Heresy and death are synonyms. Nothing can have a permanent foothold in the human soul or in the world but that which responds to the entire range of man's spiritual desire, and which most truthfully authenticates the testimony of revelation. It is because of this that the Church and the world will not suffer a flood of naturalism or rationalism to flood and chill them to death,—that they will refuse to allow the planks to go from under their feet, and go to pieces on a sea of reckless speculation, floating away anywhere, "some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship." It is this law of the Divine Providence, protective and conservative in its character, which forbids the acceptance of Mr. Parker's lean faith by any but a small portion of his own and our countrymen. He has now passed through "the tall porches of eternity," and we will not repress the thought and the hope, that he has found the fulness of the glory and truth of which his enunciations are meagre half-truths. We feel sure his errors and faults were mostly of the intellect, and that a heart that throbbed to the calls of mercy, and the rights of man, and the moral law of God, as his did, is not likely to be shut out from the Kingdom. The "*Opuscula*" which he has left behind will be useful to the world in showing two things,—the last logical results of the rationalistic theories of the inspiration of the Scriptures, and the utter impotence of man when attempting to manufacture a religion out of himself.

G. B. P.

THE LOST TALES OF MILETUS.

WHILE Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton's pretensions to the title of a true poet are being warmly canvassed, and diverse judgments are pronounced by his critics, another volume of poems appears, demanding consideration before the final verdict is written. We fear it will not settle the controversy. Where his claims are conceded these tales have been welcomed with enthusiastic acclamations; but none who have hitherto denied his possession of the true poetical gift have been converted by the present volume. The author must leave this as he has left his "Collected Poems," for the decision of a more appreciative and just posterity. Possibly they may "some day become better known to his countrymen," and their unanimous voice may crown him with the laureate's wreath.

Whatever may be said as to their poetical merit these "Tales" are at least another proof of that high ambition, unsparing industry and versatility of genius for which Sir Bulwer Lytton is pre-eminently famous. They exhibit all that gracefulness of phrase, tenderness of sentiment, polished reflection, and breadth of learning which readers naturally expect in every new contribution to literature—whether novel or poem—from his prolific pen. That they would meet with general approval their author could not anticipate. The classical character of the subjects, independently of the peculiar rhythm in which they are presented will prevent their obtaining an extensive circulation. The poetical form of these "Tales" is an experiment which their author says he has "long cherished a desire to adventure; viz., that of new combinations of blank or rhymeless metre, composed not in lines of arbitrary length and modulation (of which we have a few illustrious examples) but in the regularity and compactness of uniform stanzas, constructed upon principles of rhythm very simple in themselves, but which so far as I am aware have not hitherto been adopted, at least for narrative purposes." We congratulate him that the experiment has proved so evident a success. There is a felicitous cadence, a freedom and balance of metre of which we have few examples in English poetry. Exception might easily be taken to certain lines and stanzas which limp feebly along, or lose force by redundancy of phrase, but the task were as ungrateful as it is unnecessary.

Some readers may be anxious to know what is meant by "The Lost Tales of Miletus." Great obscurity involves the subject. Tradition, even less satisfactory than ordinary, is the only source of our knowledge. They are supposed to be a number of stories composed chiefly by Aristides, of Miletus—an historian of doubtful reputation. Most probably they represented Greek life in Ionia as the Arabian Nights picture Oriental character, and the Fables of Boccaccio the customs and questionable morals of Italy in the middle ages. From the mere fragments of these "Tales" which have come down to us, it is impossible to say what was their general style and purpose. We can only guess the nature of the original fictions from certain other fables said to be formed on the same model; *e. g.* the romance of "The Golden Ass," by Apuleius.

Tradition speaks of them as "obscene" and "licentious," but those we possess are entirely free from such a charge. They must have exercised great influence. "The strongest presumption in favour of their merit rests on the evidence of the popularity they enjoyed both among Greeks and Romans in times when the imaginative literature of either people was at its highest point of cultivation."

Sir Bulwer Lytton has displayed considerable ingenuity in reconstructing from scattered fragments of tale and myth; "a few stories that may serve as feeble specimens of the various kinds of subject in which these ancestral tale-tellers may have exercised their faculties of invention." There are anacronisms not a few. Some of the heroes and heroines talk much like the same kind of people in a modern English novel, but strict historical accuracy the author does not attempt.

Out of the series of eight "Tales" we select "The Secret Way," the first, and, we think, the most complete.

The incidents are exceedingly simple but skilfully grouped and narrated with dramatic force and rapidity. Individual character and feeling are sketched with striking vividness, while sentiments of reflective wisdom are clothed in words graceful and touching. There is a rich glow as of sunset hues suffusing the whole story. Isolated passages might be selected in proof, but we prefer briefly telling the story, quoting as we proceed. Omartes, a Scythian monarch, having forsaken the simple ways and tents of his wandering fathers, built a city and a regal palace. Proud of his achievement he one day leads Telcutias the High Priest through its halls, courting his applause, but the far-seeing sage only foretells disaster.

"Thou hast forgot to bid thy masons close
The chinks of stone against Calamity."

Seuthes, a favourite but traitorous chief, comforts the king by suggesting that the priest's covetousness was the cause of his evil prophecy. We are thus subtly prepared for the evil which ensues. Our author points to the threatening cloud, now only the size of a man's hand. In immediate contrast stands Omartes' fair and only daughter—Argiope.

"To her, indeed, had Aphrodité given
Beauty, that royalty which subjects kings;
Sweet with unconscious charm
And modest as the youngest of the Graces."

But suddenly "the shadow of some troubled thought" falls on that bright young face. This melancholy we learn, as the story develops, has arisen from a dream of an ideal lover. The king discerns the change but cannot discover its cause. He consults the priest who advises marriage.

"Look round the forest kings
And to the stat'liest wed thy royal blossom."

With Omartes' agonized feeling every true-hearted parent will sympathize.

"Sharp is a father's pang when comes the hour
In which his love contents his child no more,
And the sweet wonted smile
Fades from his hearthstone to rejoice a stranger's.

"But soon from parent love dies thought of self."

Omartes selects Zariades, a neighbouring prince, formidable as foe or ally, as worthiest of his peerless daughter. The project creates dissension among the chiefs, but by Seuthes' influence the king's will prevails.

Here is Seuthes' portrait—

"He, the fierce leader of the fiercest horde
Won from the wild by greed of gain and power,
Stood on the ground between
Man social and man savage, dark and massive.

"So rugged was he that men deemed him true;
So secret was he that men deemed him wise;
And he had grown so great,
The throne was lost behind the subject's shadow."

Scythian envoys hasten to convey the proposal of marriage to Zariades. But over his grand brow had also fallen "the gloom of some unquiet thought," and in churlish words the proffer is rejected. Zariades, however, in sacred secrecy confides to a chief priest of the Magi that a returning dream of "the

same sweet face" is the untold reason of the refusal. He further bids him consult his mysterious lore to discover whether earth holds such a maiden.

Baffled, yet unwilling to confess failure, the Magian suggests that the goddess Medea has appeared and thereby commands him "restore the fanes and deck the altars." But the prince, with a sarcasm in his sigh, replies,

"All dreams mean temples where a Mage explains."

The envoys return, the dream slowly fades. War follows. The Scythians are beaten and flee to their city, and the horrors of a siege begin.

"Mild thro' the city moved Argiope,
Pale with a sorrow too divine for fear;
And when, at morn and eve,
She bowed her meek head to her father's blessing,

"Omarthes felt as if the righteous gods
Could doom no altars at whose foot she prayed.
Only, when all alone,
Stole from her lips a murmur like complaint,

"Shaped in these words, 'Wert thou, then, but a dream?
Or shall I see thee in the Happy Fields?'"

Overtures of peace from Zariades are rejected, and despair fills all hearts. But Teleutias, the High Priest, reveals the existence of "The Secret Way" known only to himself, by which the king may flee. He refuses for himself but longs to save his child.

"But life, as life, suffices youth for joy.
Young plants win sunbeams, shift them as we may."

The priest advises that she select a warrior husband

"And pass with him along the secret way,
To lengthen yet the line of Scythian kings."

Anxious that his daughter's choice may fall on Seuthes the king discloses the secret of the pass to that chief.

Now opportunity seems ripe for the accomplishment of his long-cherished traitorous designs. Seuthes therefore hastens to betray the city to Zariades on condition that he himself fill the vacant throne. Nobly does the prince reply:—

"Know that all kings regard as foe in common
The man who is a traitor to his king."

Availing himself of the information the prince marches his army through the pass under the city to the palace. Bidding

the host await his signal he steals along to the banquet-hall, where Omartes is just declaring to the gathered chiefs his plan for his daughter's safety. He has spoken and

"As, in the hush of eve, a sudden wind
Thrills thro' a grove and bows the crest of pines,
So crept a murmured hum
Thro' the grave banquet, and plumed heads bent downwards."

Argiope enters to make her choice :

"She filled the fatal cup,
Raised her sad eyes and vaguely gazed around her :

"Sudden those eyes took light and joy and soul;
Sudden from neck to temples flushed the rose;
And with quick, gliding steps,
And the strange looks of one who walks in slumber,

"She passed along the floors, and stooped above
A form, that, as she neared, with arms outstretched,
On bended knees sunk down
And took the wine-cup with a hand that trembled.

"A form of youth—and nobly beautiful
As Dorian models for Ionian gods.
Again !' it murmured low,
'O dream, at last ! at last ! how I have missed thee.'

"And she replied, 'The gods are merciful,
Keeping me true to thee when I despaired.'"

With splendid vigour the author describes the sudden tumult of anger and terror that swept through the hall at the strange sight, the clang of ten thousand bucklers, and the war-shout of ten thousand voices, and the serried ranks of armed men, and Zariades passing onwards amid swords uplifted—

"A girl's slight form beside him his sole guard,
He paused before the footstool of the king,
And in such tones as soothe
The wrath of injured fathers, said submissive,

"I have been guilty to the gods and thee
Of man's most sinful sin—ingratitude :
That which I pined for most
Seen as a dream, my waking life rejected.

"Now on my knees that blessing I implore.
Give me thy daughter ; but a son receive,
And blend them both in one
As the mild guardian of the Scythian River.'"

We have ventured to tell this beautiful story at so great a length as perhaps to tire our readers, but we are sure the quotations sufficiently indicate the richness and strength with which the poem abounds.

Our space will not permit us to do justice to the other Tales contained in this volume. We can only refer to two. "Death and Sisyphus" gleams with genial humourousness and many a touch of kindly yet truthful satire. Amid our laughter at the cunning rogue Sisyphus and his sly tricks, especially that of binding Death—sent by Zeus to seize him—and feeding him till he grew fat and jolly and content, there is yet a sense of the terrible oppressing the spirit.

What dramatic force is displayed in the description both of the effect of Death's absence from the earth and his sudden return! Pluto is sent to release Death, and Sisyphus is carried off to the shore of the Styx.

"Death straightway gave to Hermes at the door
His charge, and passed away upon the storm;
On sea rose yells, soon drowned beneath the waves,
On land rose shrieks soon stilled.

"And the next morning all the altars smoked,
And all the fanes were carpeted with knees:
Death had returned to earth; again to heaven
The gods returned for men."

The question suggests itself, whether Death keeps men religious? We hope this is not our author's creed. Doubtless the presence of the terrible destroyer restrains the wickedness of wicked men to a very sensible degree; but we need hardly say restraint is not religion, only love to God is worthy of that blessed name.

The picture of the solitary ghost heaving the huge stone for ever up a vaporous hill, singing hopefully as he toils, is very fine. Especially Sisyphus' reply to Orpheus. The last line conveys to the mind an unutterable impression of dauntless yet despairful perseverance.

"And could I strain to heave up the huge stone
Did I not hope that it would reach the height?
There penance ends, and dawn Elysian fields.
'But if it never reach?'

"The Thracian sighed, as looming through the mist
The stone came whirling back. 'Fool,' said the ghost,
'Then mine at worst, is everlasting hope.'
Again uprose the stone."

"The Oread's Son, a Legend of Sicily," will be considered by some more truly poetical than any of the "Tales." It will have fewer readers than "The Secret Way," and these will be divided into two classes,—those to whom it is simply a legend, and those to whom it is a sweet allegory full of subtle suggestions. We think we see in it the history of the poet's struggle to utter in human speech the divine music pent up in his soul. It

abounds in strokes of exquisite beauty and heart-breaking pathos. Many a true lesson does our author teach to brethren of his craft through the sad experience of Daphnis. None more solemn and needed than the warning against devotion to the merely material and earthly, however full of fascinations and charms. When Daphnis, the spirit-betrothed, would wed an earth-born daughter, blindness falls on him, and with the blindness loveless misery. He is carried from scenes of royal splendour back to his flocks and fields, and there left friendless.

"They left him with his reed in the still noon,
Alone amid the invisible wide world,
Alone, with his sweet reed,
And thro' the invisible wide world thrilled music.

"Again the shepherds heard the strain long-missed
And held their breath to hear; plaintive and low
As is the ringdove's coo
That lulls Pelagic virgins in Dodona.

"The gentle prelude stole to human hearts;
Anon the burden changed, the music swelled,
Joy, sorrow, hope, and fear,
Battles and banquets, love in calm and tempest.

"Pæans of triumph, solemn hymns to Zeus,
Groans wailing up from gulfs in Tartarus,
Met in the reed, which Pan,
Ensouling Nature, gave the son of Hermes.

"Abrupt the music ceased; with a sharp sigh,
In the unwonted strain the reed had burst,
*And the poor blind man stood
Lone on an earth without a link to heaven."*

He cries for the sweet spirit whose bosom he had left, and the silvery voice of the Naiad responds,

"'Child of the Oread, come;
I'll cull my starriest lilies for thy garlands,

"'And back to light unearthly kiss thy lids.
Come; on my banks there murmur sweeter reeds
Than breath could ever break,
Needing no discords to complete their music.'"

Few will call Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton one of the great teachers of the age, or claim for him a place by the side of Wordsworth, Tennyson, or Browning; but all persons of cultured taste will award him hearty praise for the numerous bright if not brilliant fancies, manly reflections, and noble pictures, which in pure and elegant language he has contributed to English Poetry.

W. B.

THE NEW MINISTRY AND ITS PROSPECTS.

It would seem to be a necessary part of our constitutional arrangements that every few years a number of noble lords and right honourable gentlemen should go through the form of accepting offices which they know they cannot retain for more than a limited period,—should make loud professions of their perfect freedom from all ambitious desires and self-claims, while at the same time they are resorting to all manner of devices for the purpose of prolonging their tenure of power—should put the country to all sorts of inconvenience and difficulty in order to free itself from an unpleasant incubus; and, finally, after submitting to every possible humiliation, and quietly abjuring the principles to which they had professed attachment, should fall, to the infinite satisfaction of all but a few selfish place-seekers. So we suppose it must be, for Lord Derby tells us with infinite *naïveté*, that had he not thus attempted an experiment which had already proved unsuccessful on two separate occasions, the Conservative party must have been dissolved. Since, therefore, as we are to believe the country exists for the Conservative party, and that party would perish unless it were allowed at certain intervals to enact the kind of farce which is going on at present, we must try and regard this very unsatisfactory arrangement with philosophic composure. Like other evils, indeed, it has its compensations. It exposes the hollowness of those chivalrous sentiments of which Toryism professes to have a monopoly; it exhibits the inheritors of our proudest titles stooping, for the sake of power, to meannesses and compromises which low-born Radicals would spurn with contempt; it frees the House of Commons from some noisy lawyers, whose spirit has become more bitter, and their eloquence more empty, with the long years during which the reward of their political service has been delayed; it helps, possibly, to the settlement of some vexed questions, in relation to which Toryism in office is much more pliable than Toryism in opposition; and, best of all, it braces the spirits, strengthens the resolves, and unites the energies of the Liberal party, who, like other armies, find it easier to meet the fierce struggles of the Parliamentary Cannæ than to resist the corrupting influences of the Downing Street Capua.

At all events, here we are in 1866, going over the same ground that was traversed seven years ago, and fourteen years ago. Lord Derby has again acquired nominal power, partly by the

misunderstandings of his opponents, and partly by the skilful finesse of his own friends. He and his party have still the same consciousness of weakness, which they betray by their piteous cries for a fair trial, their appeals for a considerate and candid judgment, of which not a trace is to be found in their own conduct. They are mainly the same performers, with a little recasting of the parts, who figured in 1852 and 1859; and there is very little alteration of their programme. They have imported into their company a respectable, industrious, but somewhat dull financier in Sir Stafford Northcote; a cold-blooded, selfish, aristocratic cynic in Lord Cranbourne; a vociferous, empty, blatant spouter in Mr. Gathorne Hardy, who, but for his illimitable self-conceit and complacency, might fancy the world had turned topsy-turvy, seeing that he finds himself member for Oxford University and a Cabinet Minister. "Tis a mad world, my masters," in very truth, or we should hardly have been invited, as we have been, even by some Liberal prints, to congratulate ourselves on the *personnel* of the New Administration. Lord Malmesbury is not at the Foreign Office, and Lord John Manners is not sent to Ireland; and in this certainly there is occasion for thankfulness, not only because of the facts, but because of the evidence they furnish that there are limits which even Toryism dares not transgress in its wanton outrages of public opinion. But with Mr. Disraeli ready to "meddle and muddle" in our finance, with Lord Cranbourne undertaking in his own insolent, supercilious style to govern India, with Lord Naas attempting to appease Fenian discontent, with Sir John Pakington's heavy pomposity presiding over a department, which, of all others, requires a clear, bold, vigorous, and practical intellect, with the "courtly Thesiger" sitting to administer that equity law of which he is so blessedly innocent,—we are at a loss to understand what there is on which we poor mortals have to felicitate ourselves. We hear great talk by some about Administrative Reform as the special duty of the Government; but their faith must be very strong, or their memories very weak, if they expect a Tory ministry to be very zealous in the correction of abuses, or the promotion of any measures of economy. Of course they will order breech-loaders, make a great show of activity in dock-yards and arsenals, find out all kinds of schemes—some good, perhaps, but many shamefully bad—for spending the money of the people; but we can find nothing either in the traditions of the Tory party, or in the antecedents of the men who constitute the present Cabinet, to encourage the hope that this Administration will contribute either to efficiency or economy. We have not forgotten the doings of former years—the Galway packet scheme, the Churchward contract, the barracks promised

to Berwick, the innumerable jobs either accomplished or proposed, the baits dangled before the constituencies in the hope of persuading them to return good true and blue supporters of Lord Derby. To expect that a Government, which, when in power before, appeared to regard the great departments of State as its own treasure-houses whose stores were to be used for the promotion of its own party objects—which used all its official influence in the most unscrupulous manner,—which even went so far as to crowd the magisterial bench with partisans and weak-minded men whom the honours of a “J.P.” could seduce from their old allegiance,—is to expect that grapes may be gathered from thorns, and figs from thistles. We have no doubt that plain words of this kind will be unpopular just now. It is the desire of some to present everything in the “*couleur de rose*,” to believe in all sorts of impossibilities; to accept the vaguest declarations as satisfactory; to ignore all the experiences of the past, and to put a blind trust, not in new and untried men, but in those whose history is enough to prove that all confidence in them would be misplaced. We are not content only to prophecy “smooth things.” We see the old men (for so in the main they are) of 1852 and 1859 coming forward and talking in the old style, with the same contempt of popular feeling, and antagonism to popular right; we do not find that they have renounced an old prejudice, or gained a single new idea; nay, we find that when they have recruited their forces it has been by the addition of men whose Toryism is of the most bald and narrow school. To ask us to believe that they nevertheless are intending to pursue a Liberal policy is to insult our understandings. Experience is a dear school, but they must be fools indeed who do not learn in it. We hope we do not belong to that number, and it is impossible, therefore, that we can trust a Tory Cabinet until, at least, it has given some proof that it is different in spirit and purpose from its own former self.

If anything could deepen the feeling of distrust with which we regard Lord Derby and his friends, it would be the way in which they speak of their own accession to office. If we are to believe them, they are a number of poor innocents who have been driven by the force of circumstances into a position which they are most reluctant to occupy. They were not born to this greatness,—for they have fallen on evil times, when the Divine rights of the upholders of the old Constitution in Church and State are not recognized. They certainly have not achieved it for themselves; for they know there are not 290 men in the House of Commons who really belong to their party; and they could have done nothing but for Adullamites—discontented placemen—haughty Whig lordlings, who care more for their order

than their old alliances—and others of the same ilk. They have had the greatness thrust upon them, and like a divine of the Philpotts order, who feels that he must say “*Nolo Episcopari*” to the offer of the mitre which has been the object of his daily labours and his nightly dreams for years, or the coy maiden who must first say “No” to the suitor for whom she has been angling at every ball and assemblée of an entire season, so these grave seigneurs, these “pillars of the State” seem to think it necessary to assure the country that they never dreamed of finding themselves in their present position. They were never guilty of such a crime as to think of office. Oh no, not they! Inferior natures might be influenced by such worldly and selfish aspirations, but they are not made of common clay, and are not acted upon by such vulgar considerations. True, Lord Derby called his followers together again and again, and carefully organized their assaults. True, a Grosvenor, or a Hayter, or a Dunkellin, knew exactly where to find allies and associates, and whatever was the motion, provided only it could embarrass or annoy the Government, these self-denying gentlemen were ready to support it. True, Lord Stanley himself resorted to a manœuvre which, even on the somewhat loose principles that govern political warfare, was condemned—for which even the *Times* itself could not stammer out an apology. True, Lord Derby was willing to take in Lord Clarendon, so recently denounced by one of his chief lieutenants, and the Duke of Somerset, not long ago bitterly assailed by another—in fact, anybody or everybody who would acknowledge him as chief, and maintain him in power. Still, office was the last thing of which they thought, and they are entitled to the sympathies of all who can appreciate the virtues and feel for the sorrows of those who are paying the penalties of a disinterested patriotism!

Out upon such hypocrisies! We wonder how the men who indulge in them can look each other in the face without laughing. We wonder still more how they can expect to find dupes. On one point we may indeed be glad. They have not a single fault to allege against their predecessors. If the Liberal ministry has fallen, at least it has fallen honourably—fallen, indeed, on the confession of its opponents, because it has taken too exalted a view of the demands of its own honour. It has not embroiled us in war, or mismanaged our national resources, or committed some gross and irreparable blunders in our diplomacy. Even in relation to the marvellous achievement of ordering breech-loaders, which, after the Prussian success, was the first thing a War Secretary with a grain of common sense might be expected to do, the action of the new Ministry had been anticipated by its predecessors. With great parade the policy of non-intervention

has been proclaimed, and a number of people who are looking out for the good things the Tories are to give profess to be immensely delighted. A wonderful compliment, certainly, they pay to the new Cabinet when they express real pleasure and surprise at finding that they are not going to write themselves down madmen at once by initiating a policy which every man out of Bedlam would condemn. But even here Lord Stanley can only imitate Lord Clarendon. It remains to be seen whether he can play the part as well. He is undoubtedly the ablest and most liberal man in the Cabinet, but the present session has shown how amenable he is to party considerations and party influences. We do not wonder that he is anxious to make the best use of his unfortunate blunder—for in Parliamentary strategy a tricky move always is a blunder. We should have been glad, however, that he had been able to do something more than give a distinct and unqualified denial to a charge the evidence for which is so overwhelming. It is a very small matter what notice the Government may have received of his motion; though, on this point, Lord Stanley is very wise in employing only the vaguest terms. The gravamen of the offence was that he brought forward a purely factious resolution—one that rested on no principle, and could have accomplished no good—that he supported it by arguments insulting to honourable opponents—that he introduced it in such a way as to secure unfair advantage. If Lord Stanley had frankly and fully confessed an error into which he had been betrayed by the excitement of controversy, his former deportment might have led his opponents to condone a very grave offence. As it is, he has, in our judgment, only added to his original sin, and enters office with much less kindly feeling and confidence than would have been extended to him twelve months ago.

The great visible results of the Tory accession to office are, that Mr. Gladstone is excluded, for the time being, from the position which, of all men of the day, he is eminently qualified to fill, and that Parliamentary Reform is postponed. Indeed, the only bond of union between Lord Derby and those pseudo-Liberals whose support he hopes to receive is hatred to Mr. Gladstone and Reform. Of the treatment which Mr. Gladstone has received we cannot trust ourselves to speak—so strong is the indignation that we feel. His transcendent genius, his high conscientiousness, his eminent services to the Liberal party, have all gone for nothing. Now and then his marvellous eloquence, whose power was found even more in the singleness of purpose and strength of conviction which it expressed than in the high intellectual qualities by which it was distinguished, awed even an unruly assembly into silence and admiration. But these were the exceptions; and night after night he was exposed to a treatment trying

to any nature, but most of all to one of his exquisite nervous susceptibility. The cruel insults, the bitter taunts, the rude interruptions, the ungenerous insinuations to which he was exposed, are now matters of history, but they will not be easily forgotten by a people who know that his great fault has been his fidelity to them. The worst has not been told in the public papers. The following extract, from the *British Quarterly Review*, containing a description of a scene by an eye-witness, is a sample of many of which the outside world has heard nothing:—

“In the re-distribution debate, Sir John Pakington taunted Mr. Gladstone with having said that the Government had only received the electoral statistics the Friday before the first debate, whereas Mr. Gladstone only spoke of a complete and revised copy. In answer to this taunt, plausible, but made, on the face of it, with malice aforethought, Mr. Gladstone, who was lying back on the Treasury bench, raised himself on his elbow and uttered an audible and indignant ‘No.’ Sir John paused for a second to enjoy the prospect which opened out before him. He tucked his coat tails with much deliberation over his left arm, and with his right arm and forefinger pointing, with studied provocation, across the table to Mr. Gladstone, ‘I am sorry,’ he said, ‘that I have made the right hon. gentleman angry. I am sorry that I should have raised the anger of the right hon. gentleman. If the statement of the right hon. gentleman’s own words is to be the occasion for the exhibition of his temper, I think it is a matter to be much regretted.’ And this continued for several minutes, the courteous aristocrat ringing the changes upon ‘anger,’ ‘angry,’ ‘temper,’ ‘intemperance,’ through twenty sentences with all the coldness of studied malice and pointed insult.”

That the House of Commons has been restive under Mr. Gladstone’s lead is not surprising. The transition from Lord Palmerston, with his free-and-easy style, his indifference to principles and complaisance to men, to one whose whole soul is possessed by the truth he seeks to advance, to whom office would have no attractions if he was denied the power of promoting the measures he esteems essential to the welfare of the country, was too marked and decided to be altogether pleasant. There can be no doubt that the present disorganized condition of the Liberal party, is the penalty we have to pay for the past years of Palmerston worship. We set up an idol unworthy of our homage, and they that made him became like unto him, regardless of high political virtue, unable to appreciate the noblest qualities of a true statesman, worshippers of material prosperity and success, political sceptics to whom strong faith was nothing but the subject for a sneer, and the generous

aspirations of patriotism and freedom an idle fanaticism, worthy of notice only, if it could be used for their selfish ends. Mr. Gladstone is, for the hour, the victim of this state of feeling, but it cannot be for long. Possibly he may have been too disdainful of men of inferior intellectual or moral endowments; possibly the earnestness of his spirit may, sometimes, have carried him too far for the temper of the House; but if his offences were ten times as great, they would be slight, when compared with his high endowments and great services. We are not, after all, so rich in great men, that we can afford to snub one who towers head and shoulders above all his adversaries. He leaves office without a stain on his reputation; and he is sure to return to it amid the acclamations of a people who will not fail to repay, with a hearty devotion, the trust which he has reposed in them. The ungenerous way in which the Tory party from Lord Derby down to the penny trumpet, which, day by day, squeaks out his praises in the press, have exaggerated any defects in his manner, is certain to react in his favour, and to the disgrace of those who have employed modes of warfare so unmanly and discreditable. For the future we have no fear. We can afford to wait the development of events; if there have been errors in procedure, they can be rectified, if sufficient deference has not been shown to the different sections of the Liberal host, a more conciliatory course may be adopted, and after a time a party once more united, can advance to certain victory. We are not afraid that the great Whig houses will ultimately abandon the popular cause. Their selfishness and fear have been industriously played on; they may have looked somewhat jealously on the supremacy of one who was not of their own circle; they may have fancied that to follow Mr. Gladstone was really to obey Mr. Bright. But there are not many of them who will obey the insidious counsels a certain school of writers is so eager to offer them. It was, on the whole, wise that Parliament should not be dissolved at present, for the feelings of some are too excited to render the unanimous action of the Liberal party possible; and the advantage might have been on the side of reaction, or, at least, not so decided in favour of progress as was necessary for definite results. But these feelings of the hour will die away; the Whig lords will come to understand that, unless they would lose all their *prestige*, they must return to their old colours, they will become more reconciled to Mr. Gladstone's lead, and we shall secure a measure of Reform more likely to satisfy all parties, because it is the result of calm and mature deliberation. It is only in the heat of passion that men can think it wise to defy a class having so many elements of true power as our working-men; and in more sober moments

they will see the wisdom of giving the Constitution greater security, by widening the basis on which it rests, and laying its foundations deep in the attachment of a free and enlightened people, admitted to their proper share in its privileges.

BRIEF NOTICES OF BOOKS.

Wherefore, Whether, and Whither? or The Bible and its Would-be Translators. By HENRY F. A. PRATT, M.D. London: Churchill & Sons. 1866.

THIS is a letter addressed to M. Amadée Thierry, president of a society formed in Paris for accomplishing a new translation of the Scriptures, in which this earnest Biblical student draws attention to the immense gain to truth which he alleges is to be derived from the rejection of the vowel points of the Hebrew Bible. We noticed his volume on the subject in December, 1866; and now, by way of letting Dr. Pratt introduce himself to our readers, extract his observations on the miracle of the standing still of the sun and the prayer of Joshua, which our readers will no doubt duly ponder:—

“According to the received, and therefore modern, traditional reading of this narrative, the sun and the moon stood still at the command of Joshua, in order to prolong the day and give the Israelites time to avenge themselves upon their enemies—this arrest of a primary and fundamental law of nature having been continued for about a whole day.

“Every mind that has been trained by the exact teachings of modern science instinctively recoils from this account, and, accepting it as a true rendering of the original narrative, regards it as a mythical story, most probably grounded on a false view of some actual occurrence, the real nature of which cannot now be determined. Indeed, since the most ancient version of the original—the Septuagint—has adopted, and thus, so far as its power goes, aided in perpetuating the received reading, it would have seemed like madness to call it in question until the possible false principle of interpretation that I have just pointed out was recognized; but now, if you have so far followed me with attention, you will be prepared, at least, tentatively, to disregard the great antiquity of the tradition, and the weight of authority which sustains it, and, uninfluenced by the prejudices of others, consider for yourself how far I am justified in the assertion that an incorrect reading, based upon a mistaken apprehension of the value of the unpointed text, has been here also the cause of the long recognized antagonism between Scripture and Science.

* * * * *

“The history to be examined is contained in Josh. x. 7—14. It is divided into two parts: the *first* (v. 7—11) an account of the facts of the case, and the *second* (v. 12—14) of the phenomena that accompanied, and determined the general character of, the previously recorded facts; and, because these two accounts follow each other the interpreter has fallen into the error of

supposing that the subjects of either record also followed each other in a similar manner. Hence, after gathering a rude general idea of the narrative form and structure of the amalgamated account, he concluded that the miraculous event of which he was reading was brought about towards the close of a long day of hard fighting, and to enable the forces under the command of Joshua to put the at length retreating masses of the enemy completely and thoroughly to the rout. Under this view he interpreted Joshua's prayer to God as a command to the sun, and read (v. 12), "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon," in the full belief that the sun was then declining in the heavens, the moon having but just risen; and that the necessities of the case required a prolongation of the day to enable the Israelites to convert a partial success into a complete victory. Then, in the statement that follows, seeing an immediate act of obedience to the command just uttered, he continues to read—"And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel"—and thus, guided by a preconceived idea, inverts the whole sense of the passage. It is true that had he carefully considered v. 11 he would have seen that it was in direct contradiction to his theory, since it states that more people were killed by the hailstones than by the Israelites, and thus shows that the avenging act was God's, and that He performed it in such a manner as to place this beyond a doubt; but a tradition—a vague and floating tradition—still remained of the marvellous event here recorded, according to which he knew that it was believed that the function of the sun was for the time arrested. This function had been very naturally identified with its apparent motion: hence the idea that the act of arresting the function of the sun was identical with that of making it stand still; and, since the account was appended to the history of the battle and slaughter, he concluded that the sun was made to stand still towards the close of the day, or just before setting, in order to prolong the day in the manner and for the purpose stated. And yet there was another evidence that this view was a mistaken one, founded on a misconception—an evidence which cannot be controverted by even the most sceptical inquirer when it is once put before him—for the relative positions of the sun and the moon at the time of the miracle are given. But how were they placed? The sun over Gibeon, or to the east, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, or west of the position occupied by the army of Joshua! Hence the period of the miracle was the dawn of the day, when it would have been unnecessarily premature to invoke it for the purpose stated. But with the recognition of this fact the whole superstructure theoretically raised through oversight of it, like a house built upon sand at the first onset of the storm, falls to the ground!

"The tradition alreading thus melting away, the recovery of the original sense will not now be difficult; indeed, all that is necessary is to gather from the history of the facts the real requirements of the case, when these will lead to the true account of the concurrent physical phenomena. The facts are these. Joshua was implored by the Gibeonites to come up quickly and save them from the overwhelming hosts that were arrayed against them. Under the pressure of this urgent prayer he made a forced march in the night in order that he might come upon the investing army of the Amorites suddenly, evidently with the design of attacking them in the darkness, that, by throwing them into confusion, he might thus make the result of his attack more certain—his anticipated victory more complete.

"To carry out this design, it was necessary that his army should reach the camp of the enemy before the dawn, that, finding them asleep and unprepared, his assault might also be a surprise. Hence the night march. But, owing to some unexpected delay, Joshua did not reach Gibeon till the dawn, when, fearing that his design would be frustrated by the breaking of the day, he prayed that the darkness might be prolonged; and his prayer was heard, and answered by the sudden storm which shrouded the rising sun in dense clouds. Under the cover of this awe-inspiring storm, the army of Joshua delivered its assault, and the double event caused such a panic in the lines of the besieging forces, that they fled in utter confusion, their rout being completed by the storm in the manner related.

"Criticized from this stand-point, you will now be fully prepared to find that Joshua x. 12—14, when rightly interpreted, says—

"Then spake Joshua to Jehovah (on the occasion of Jehovah delivering up the Amorites before the children of Israel), and said in the sight of Israel—'Let the sun be obscured over Gibeon, and the moon over the valley of Ajalon.' And the sun was obscured, and the moon also, while the people arose against its enemies. Is not this written on trustworthy testimony? And the sun remained in the clouds of the heavens, and shone not on arising like an ordinary day. And there has not been such an event as this, before it or after it, as to the hearkening of Jehovah unto the voice of a man; for Jehovah fought for Israel.'

"This retranslation is gained not by giving a new sense to the several hierographic forms implicated, but by causing them to bear a sense in this passage which has been given to them elsewhere, and which, indeed, in almost all of them, more closely approximates to their simple primary significance. It is conclusive as an illustration of the absolute unreliability of the Jewish traditions, and at the same time approves itself so completely to the unprejudiced understanding, that I think it will hardly be questioned by any dispassionate inquirer. But, lest on this account it should be supposed that it rests rather upon an appeal to the imagination than on evidence convincing to the reason, I must, even at the risk of seeming unduly prolix, invite you to examine how strong its actual basis is, through the consideration of the power of some of the signs under the analytical process to which I subject them, &c."—pp. 32-38.

The Home Life in the Light of its Divine Idea. By JAMES BALDWIN BROWN, B.A. Smith, Elder, & Co. 1866.

It is one of the penalties which critics and readers of the present day have to pay for the easy-going habit of praising every book and every author to the very uttermost that a drowsy conscience will permit, that, when a work really deserving of high praise comes before us, our vocabulary is exhausted, or, at all events, the ordinary epithets of eulogy have lost their proper significance. Now we honestly ~~want~~ to say that we think very highly of Mr. Brown's volume on "Home Life," but we instantly call to mind the eulogistic phrases and superlatives that have been abundantly lavished in even "religious newspapers" (so-called) and periodicals, on thoroughly worthless publications; so that we are almost ashamed to praise where even much praise is due. We will, therefore, simply congratulate Mr. Brown on having been prompted and enabled to render his generation this service. We give the preface:—

"I spent some days last autumn at a large old mansion in the north of England, where a troop of bright young girls are being trained to a wise

and noble womanhood. It was while watching their happy and beautiful home life, and thinking what might grow out of their culture in the homes in which they may one day rule, that I formed the plan of instruction for my own congregation during the winter months, the results of which this book contains. At first it was my purpose to publish some of these discourses separately, and in a slighter form; but the subject grew on my hands as I thought it out, to a more formal completeness than I at first intended, and I have gladly yielded to many very pressing requests, from those whose judgment I respect, that I would publish them in this complete and permanent form.

"My aim has been, as my readers will discover, to study the closest relations, and [the most] sacred duties of life in the light of Him, whose incarnation reveals the principle of their closeness and sacredness. In this, and in all regions of thought, I desire increasingly to get as near to this life as possible; being convinced that the root of the true 'Eirenicon', in home life, church life, and state life, lies here. If by these pages I can help any to understand even a little more clearly, and to feel even a little more deeply, how sacred these relationships are in the Lord, it will be a source of great thankfulness to me. The renewal of homes must precede all other renewals in wider spheres, for which we pray. May God hasten it in our times."

In treating this and other topics, Mr. Brown occupies a certain vantage ground in his happy and, as we believe, thoroughly scriptural faith in the Fatherhood of God. Begin with sin, the fall, the devil, and the light that is in us will be darkness: begin with God and end with God, and the true light indeed shineth.

There is in this volume a thoroughness and frank, manly outspokenness, a broad, deep, earnest sympathy; a power both of love and of that righteous hate which grows out of the truest love, and withal a wise, and just, and tender discrimination, that must make it refreshing and invigorating to heart and conscience alike, while its counsels will be a blessed help to many who want to know the way that they may walk therein. Wherever our judgment has weight Mr. Baldwin's "Home Life" will be obtained, and thoughtfully read and pondered, and, we trust, assimilated.

A Commentary on St. Matthew's Gospel, designed for Teachers, Preachers, and Educated English Readers generally. By EUSTACE R. CONDER, M.A. London: Elliot Stock. 1866.

The Critical English Testament; being an Adaptation of Bengel's Gnomon, with numerous Notes, showing the precise Results of Modern Criticism and Exegesis Edited by Rev. W. L. Blackley, M.A., and Rev. James Hawes, M.A. Vol. I., *The Gospels*. London: Alexander Strahan. 1866.

In both these works there is a most praiseworthy attempt to place the English student of the Gospels, as far as may be, on a level with the scholar who enjoys all the advantages of scholarship, and has access to the best expositors of various schools. Mr. Conder's object is to elucidate the first of the four Gospels; and his work is complete in one volume, the size and price of which will place it within the reach of Sunday school teachers and village preachers. Mr. Con-

der justly says, "Certainly there is room for a work, which, by plainness and brevity of style, completeness and accuracy of treatment, and cheapness of price, shall bring within easy reach of every ordinarily well-educated English reader, the substantial and valuable results of modern scholarship and research." This is what he has, to a considerable extent, accomplished; and we should have been glad, if our space would allow us, to give a few specimens of a work which it is no small honour for a man to have presented to the Church; but we must content ourselves with saying that Mr. Conder has done well what he set himself to do; and we are sure his volume will be a great boon to those for whom it is intended. Mr. Conder's own standpoint is that of the majority of the Nonconformist Evangelical Churches, and, as a matter of course, those whose equally devout study and meditation have led them to somewhat broader views will here and there, perhaps, dissent from his Exposition. On the Lord's Prayer, for instance, he says, "This is not a prayer for all men as men, but for Christians as Christians;" and warns the reader against inferring from the words, "Our Father," that God, as the Creator, is the Father of all men.

The second work which we have coupled with this will be complete in three volumes, of which the first only is as yet published. This, of 720 pages, carries us through the Gospels. The second will contain The Acts and the Pastoral Epistles; and the third the other Epistles and the Apocalypse. Each volume six shillings. The book itself is a skilful and judicious carrying out of the object as set forth on the title-page, and deserves the highest commendation. Thoroughly convinced that a personal and loving acquaintance with the New Testament itself is the very best means of preserving that confidence in Revelation, which there is so much in the present day to unsettle, we give a most hearty welcome to the gentlemen who, by this labour of love, are rendering a precious service to their generation. That the publisher will find in a large sale the reward of his enterprize we fully believe as well as hope. This first volume is, in all respects, admirable. We know nothing equal to it for the English reader. Is it too late to suggest that we hope the exposition of the Apocalypse may prove as satisfactory as the rest of the work? *Verbum sat.*

Passages from the Diary and Letters of Henry Craik, of Bristol. By W. ELFE TAYLER, with an introduction by Mr. George Müller. London: Shaw & Co.

It would have been a grave omission if the excellent fellow-labourer with Mr. Müller, of Orphan House fame, had been allowed to pass away without some permanent record of his worth. We believe this endeavour to afford some insight into his character will help the true life of every one who reads it. Mr. Craik was no ordinary Christian, no ordinary servant of the Master's, but one who indeed purchased to himself a good degree. We think some of the extracts from his diary trivial; but we cannot read these pages without feeling that we ought to be wiser and better men, more simple and more devoted disciples than we have ever been. Mr. Craik was one of

those men in whom we are called on to admire and magnify the grace of God.

Lynton Grange. A Novel. By JOHN R. S. HARRINGTON. London: F. Pitman.

A PLEASANTLY enough written story, with evidently a good deal of it sketched from the life. There is a healthful tone pervading it, a love of nature, and a love of truth; and, although the religious is not obtruded, yet the influence of religion on the mind of the writer is plainly perceptible. A scene or two may, perhaps, be considered of the semi-sensational kind; and we can conceive of some readers raising a query on the desirableness of a bit here and there. But the author would say that life abounds in just such incidents and experiences, and that as the innocence of ignorance is in these "fast" days out of the question, we must labour the more to secure the higher innocence of principle and choice. We think, however, that George Wilson's love for the poor nursery governess was already, by circumstances, put to a sufficiently severe social test, without requiring the superadded element of tragic horror. And we also think Mr. Harrington will do well in his future painting to study proportion, and avoid the error which the early disciples of the modern pre-Raphaelite school of art were for a time betrayed into, of rendering even the more trivial accessories as exactly as the more important features.

Swiss Pictures drawn with Pen and Pencil. The Illustrations by Mr. E. WHYMPER, F.R.G.S. London: The Religious Tract Society.

ANOTHER admirably illustrated publication by the Religious Tract Society, which it is a pleasure to introduce to the notice of our readers, and heartily to commend. The preface states truly that "Mr. Whympers is pre-eminent amongst modern engravers for his knowledge of mountain forms, and his power of delineating them. His intimate acquaintance with Switzerland has afforded him facilities for its pictorial illustration which few artists have enjoyed." It was a happy idea "to present his designs in a collected and permanent form, with the advantages of fine-toned paper and careful printing." The letter-press, too, we consider every way worthy of the illustrations, and the whole quality of the book deserves our praise. Those who know Switzerland will value the book for its faithful representations of scenes they are glad to possess such admirable reminiscences of, while stay-at-home travellers will find here as happy a substitute for personal exploration as they can desire.

Sermons for the Sick and the Afflicted. By the late REV. HUGH STOWELL, M.A. London: Hamilton, Adams, & Co. 1866.

FAILING to find a volume of sermons prepared expressly for the house of mourning and the chamber of sickness, Canon Stowell devoted his time, when illness disabled him from his public duties, to the writing of these discourses, which are now given to the Christian Church "as he wrote them—his last offering—written in much pain and weakness." The last sermon in the volume, on Psalm cxxvi., 5,

he was writing when seized with the attack of diphtheria which terminated his life. The discourses, admirably printed in large type, are just such as we should expect from a sincere and devout Christian man of the author's religious school, and compel our respect for the deep tone of piety and tender sympathy which they exhibit. In many a sick chamber and house of mourning they will be felt to be very opportune and welcome.

Keil and Delitzsch, on the Books of Samuel. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark. 1866.

Delitzsch, on the Book of Job. Vol. I. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark. 1866.

THESE two volumes of Clark's Foreign Theological Library will be welcomed by all English students of the Old Testament who do not know the German commentators whose valuable labours are thus given to them in a competent translation. We do not profess to have gone carefully through the whole of the volumes, but we have endeavoured to form a trustworthy judgment, and are able honestly to commend the exposition as, in general, very valuable. At the same time we are of opinion that Delitzsch has occasionally allowed a dogmatic interest to influence him, although it may well be quite unconsciously. But even in this respect, his bias is of the kind that will make his work the more acceptable to a large number of his English readers.

Beauties and Wonders of Vegetable Life; or, Rambles in Parks, Forests, Conservatories, Orchards, Gardens, Fields, and Heaths. London: Religious Tract Society.

AN interesting little book, fairly bearing out its title, and one which deserves to be a favourite with our young friends.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Essays for the Times. By Dr. RIGG.

Sermons. By HENRY SMITH.

Chronological Synopsis of the Four Gospels. By H. GRENVILLE.

Master and Scholar, &c. By E. H. PLUMPTRE, M.A.

Characteristics of Christ's Teaching. By C. J. VAUGHAN, D.D.

Sermons for the Sick and Afflicted. By late Canon STOWELL.

PAMPHLETS AND MAGAZINES.

Truths and Opinion.

Hades. By H. DUNN.

Theological Review.

The Class and the Desk.

A Two Nights' Discussion, &c. Messrs. Roberts & Nightingale.

Baptist Magazine.

Sword and Trowel.

The Truth Seeker.

The Appeal.

THE
CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR.

SEPTEMBER, 1866.

THE ROUND TABLE.

CHAPTER X.

NEAR DAMASCUS—WANTED—A STRANGE STORY, BUT NOT NEW—
THE DORCAS MEETING—"THAT MISS LANGSTON!"

FOR some days, as we have mentioned, the reunited friends had found enough in the past to occupy their thoughts and conversation, and seemed by tacit consent to postpone all reference to the future. But, somehow, there also seemed to be a silent recognition of the idea that changes of some kind were impending; and Mr. Sydney had every now and then dropped hints to the effect that he should not consent to his old friend's remaining a fixture at Bablyk-Hythe. But this was a strange tone for one to take who, in former days at all events, had been mainly dependent on his own talent and industry; and yet there was a something, a *je ne sais quoi*, which seemed as if he were only taking such an elder son's tone as he might very properly take; and one which he could also afford to take, for money appeared now to be at his command; and, in all his references to the future, ample means for whatever he chose to do seemed to be assumed as a matter of course. There was evidently a mystery of some kind, which would no doubt be explained sooner or later; meanwhile the four were so autumnally happy together that no one was in any hurry to turn over the next page.

But on an early evening after the Sunday we have referred to, when Edith was gone to a Dorcas meeting, or something of

that kind, and the three gentlemen were left to themselves, Mr. Sydney said—

“Well, Graham, I think the time has come for us to give that explanation which will perhaps rather surprise our friend, seeing it must appear more like a chapter from some idle romance than the sober truth it is.”

Glancing at Mr. Langston, he saw that the intimation of the coming *dénouement* was visibly affecting him, and, in the outward signs of his inward disturbance, Mr. Sydney had fresh proof of the weakened tone of his friend's nervous system. So, turning to him, he continued—

“But don't be alarmed, you dear friend, for, though I have a strange history to narrate, there is not a single thing in the whole of it to cause you, or either of us, a moment's dismay. Indeed, most men I suppose would congratulate me on what they would call my good fortune, and would declare that, in spite of all the troubles and awkwardnesses which surrounded my youth, I must after all have been born with a silver spoon in my mouth, or rather perhaps a golden one. Not that I ever cared much for wealth, as you know, although I do not profess to undervalue it, and am quite able to appreciate the blessing of such an amount as secures me against the more corrosive anxieties of life, and will enable me to accomplish some little amount of good, I trust, in my day.”

He paused for a moment, and, as the silence was unbroken, he presently continued—

“One evening, when we were encamped in the Desert, intending to enter Damascus the next day, and the camels were secured for the night, and Graham and I were smoking in front of our tent, with the big stars, like lumps of gold, shining down upon us from the deep blue sky (almost black, indeed), we became aware, by the barking of our dogs at first, and presently by our own observation, that strangers were approaching. Our Arab fellows were already on the alert, and ready to receive a foe if such should prove to be the character of the strangers. But all suspicion was soon at an end, for they presently stood revealed as most unmistakable Englishmen; at least the two of most consideration, for all the others in their train were but guides and attendants. The welcome we gave them seemed extremely gratifying; indeed they appeared to appreciate it far beyond its desert, and expressed to each other a satisfaction at the manner in which their day's journey had terminated that would have had in it something strange if we had regarded them as experienced travellers. This, however, we saw almost at a glance they were not. And in the conversation that soon began we early learned that it was no spirit of adventure, nor enthusiastic

love of travel, nor fond desire to visit the famous places of old-world renown that had brought them into the Desert, but that they were bound on an errand of business, and business too of grave importance. As we did not of course attempt to pry into their peculiar reasons for travel, and received their intimations of the gravity of their object without manifesting any curiosity to know what it was, they presently went on to say that they should not have intruded any such intimation on us if they had not reason to hope that they were now on the point of finding the clue they were in quest of. I need not say that all this was totally unintelligible to us; but judge of our surprise when, following up the last remark, one of them said—

“‘If I am correct in my surmise, you, sir, pass under the name of Sydney, and your travelling companion is Captain Graham.’”

“We had no reason to be ashamed of our names, and, on our acknowledging ourselves, our new acquaintances introduced themselves more formally, one of them as the Rev. E. Robinson, domestic chaplain to the Right Honourable the Earl of Yarnton, and the other as Mr. Finlay, the confidential family solicitor of that nobleman. Well, of course, this of itself was only of a piece with no end of more or less agreeable little *rencontres* perpetually occurring in foreign travel. To-day we are the associates of gentlemen, and to-morrow our haphazard companions would not like too much scrutiny to be made into their history. But there was a slight air of mystery about the new comers which, as you will conceive, was not lessened when they added that, if indeed we were the gentlemen they had supposed and we had avowed, the one object of their journey to the East was accomplished, and they hoped we would consent to return to England with them at once. With such a strange preface you may be sure that, late as it was, and pleasantly as before their arrival we had been anticipating the night's rest, we were willing enough to refill our pipes, and listen to the statements they might please to make.”

“How strange!” exclaimed Mr. Langston. “Why, how in the world did they contrive to find you?”

“Oh,” replied the other, “they would have but little difficulty in that, when once they had the clue, which you yourself, my friend, I found had furnished them with in most complete unconsciousness.”

“I!” exclaimed Mr. Langston, in surprise.

“You,” rejoined Mr. Sydney; “and no one else. Do you remember a gentleman from London who, one Sunday morning, found his way into your chapel, and at the close of the service lingered about, looking at the memorial tablets, till he attracted

your notice, and got into conversation with you, and then attended the service again in the evening, and, again contriving to come in your way, begged permission to pay his respects to you in the morning?"

"Very well indeed;" replied Mr. Langston. "Yes, I remember him. He talked for some time about some of the most eminent Nonconformist divines, as he called them—Robert Hall, Mr. Jay, and Dr. Pye Smith. But I could not make him out. He talked about them quite like an outsider, and yet seemed to try to manifest an interest in them, and in various matters that might be supposed to interest me. And next morning, before he called, there came a basket of game with his compliments; and I fancied, parson-like I suppose, that he had been interested in the Sunday services, and so paid me the compliment, for I knew no other interpretation to put upon the circumstance. Well, when he came, we of course soon got into easy chat. The portrait of 'the Mayflower' attracted his notice, and I was unawares led to be rather more communicative than is my wont with strangers; and now I remember quite well mentioning your name, which he did not, however, appear to take any notice of."

"Ah, a shrewd fellow," intercalated Mr. Sydney.

"But by-and-by," continued the other, "he proposed a stroll; and, I don't know how it happened, but he seemed unconsciously, stranger as he was, to take the lead, till we at last found ourselves in front of the old chapel, when he expressed a wish to look at the various tombstones that, as you know, crowd the ground. He said he had made a collection of curious epitaphs, and mentioned several. And so we went in and out among the graves, till, I cannot tell how, we stood beside your mother's; and, admiring the artistic beauty of the memorial work about it, and reading the inscription, he quietly asked whether the Mr. Sydney whose name I had casually mentioned in connection with the picture in my parlour was a son of the lady buried there. And then—ah, I see it all now—he led me on to talk of her and you, till, I remember, I told him about your leaving England, and where you were at the date of your last letter, then recently arrived. He appeared greatly interested, and asked what was your intended route, and where I should address a letter in case of wanting to communicate with you; and as I was innocently enough answering his questions, he took out his pocket-book, and, apologizing, said something had just occurred to him which, if I would pardon him, he would make a note of lest it should escape him. And now I have no doubt that what he jotted down was just the very information I was so communicatively giving him."

"You are right," said Mr. Sydney. "He told me subsequently of all his little devices for learning what he wished without exciting any suspicion. And so I suppose he soon brought his curiosity about the chapel and the epitaphs to an end?"

"Yes; he presently looked at his watch, and, with some expression of surprise at the rapid flight of time when one is agreeably occupied, feared he should barely be able to catch the noon-day up-coach, and so, with many apologies for the abruptness of his departure, took his leave then and there, and left me standing alone in the burial-ground; and I have never heard or seen anything of him ever since, nor did he even leave me his card!"

"Yes; he told us all about it," said Mr. Sydney, "and amused himself and us with the success of his little *ruse* for getting the clue he was in search of. However, he sent his best compliments by me, and hopes one day to have the pleasure of renewing his intercourse with you, which indeed is not unlikely. But how strange that you should have turned aside from the story I had to tell, to wonder at the way in which my trail had been found! You are in no hurry then to hear what brought your Sunday hearer on my track?"

"Well, it is quite possible," replied Mr. Langston, "that I was not other than glad to get a few moments calm before listening to what, somehow—I have grown so weak of late, so unlike myself—seems to fill me with apprehensions, that I am nevertheless sure from your manner, are perfectly groundless. But I seem now always to be dreading anything new; I shrink from surprises, even though they may be pleasant ones. But now I am prepared, so pray take up the narrative from the point at which I interrupted it by my trivial question."

Mr. Sydney then continued—

"First of all, they said their business was of a delicate and strictly private character, and they begged for an interview with me alone. But on my assuring them that my travelling companion was my bosom friend, and that all things were open and common between us, and that whatever might be the nature of the communication they had to make I should most certainly keep back nothing of it from him, but take counsel with him, they waived the request. The clerical gentleman began to tell the object of their journey, but there was so much that was awkward and hesitating and unmethodical in the manner of his going to work, that his companion, the lawyer, with an apology for the interruption, took the matter into his own hands, and, with lawyer-like method and precision, put before me a statement which banished sleep from my eyes for nearly all the sub-

sequent hours of that night' at least, I can tell you. However, as, after a fair opening of his subject, and brief sketch of it as a whole, he handed me a written statement of the 'case,' which I have in my portfolio, I will imitate his example, and, only just hinting the outline, will leave you to peruse it, with all the attesting documents, at your leisure.

"You know my early history; at least you know it as alone I knew it till that strange night. You know how my precious mother lived in a retirement which, at times, because there possibly seemed something mysterious about it, made curiosity and gossip no doubt busy with her name. But you know that beneath that gentle saint-like exterior—true lady in everything—she bore an arrow in her heart. And although you were aware of the refined honourableness of her life, you knew also, for she made you her confidante to some extent, that, had the busy little world of Bablyk-Hythe been admitted behind the scenes, she would have been compelled to seek some other retreat in which to pass the evening of her days. The grave-stone which marks her place of lowly rest bears the name which I have always borne; but the strange truth is—stranger almost than fiction, at least than probable fiction—that she was entitled to be buried in the ancestral vault of the nobleman I have mentioned, and with the family name. You knew to some extent the story of her wrongs, though I find that to the last she concealed the name and rank of the man who had filled her cup with bitterness to the brim. And you believed, as she believed to the bitter end, that she was simply the innocent victim of a wicked plot devised by an unprincipled scoundrel whom she, in her youthful innocence, had trusted in as the soul of honour. Believing herself a true and honourable wife, although by a private marriage which was to be kept secret for a time, she had no misgivings and no fears, till, suddenly, the very heavens seemed to burst above her, as the announcement was made to her that she was altogether mistaken in regarding herself as the true wife of the man who had wooed and won her in secret. Not to dwell needlessly on the distressing details, as soon as she partially recovered from the first stunning blow it was only to be informed that her husband, as she deemed him, was about to be married to a lady in his own rank of life, and that she would never see him any more. This was communicated to her by a heartless tool whom he had employed, and who, pretending to condole with her, advised her to retire to a remote part of the country, and bear her trouble as best she could. Only in one point had conscience interfered on her behalf. A settlement was made on her, and, for her peace of mind, she received a written acknowledgment (but with all names cunningly omitted) that, so carefully

had all the steps been taken by which she had been beguiled into believing herself a lawful wife, that in reality her honour was in no degree compromised, and that it was with unabated respect on his part that the connection must be broken off. This precious document is, with all the others, in my possession now.

"Well, the statement I listened to there, in the Desert, a little way short of Damascus, cleared the fair memory of my honoured mother still farther, and, in fact, to the uttermost. But it was only by a revelation which brought with it its own terrible perplexities and difficulties—perplexities and difficulties which are not even yet cleared away. It was such a story as we may often read of in works of fiction, but which even there we regard as the bungling device of quite second or third rate novelists. But the foolish inventions of romance were in this case the sober truth."

"What, the case of the Vicar of Wakefield's daughter over again?" asked Mr. Langston, as the narrator paused in some emotion.

"The very same. The marriage was a regular legal marriage, as, indeed, to do him but bare justice, he at the time intended it to be. The fraud consisted in the subsequent base and shameful transaction of persuading her into the unquestioning belief of its illegality; and then, when he found her, in her ignorance of the world and utter loneliness (for her parents were dead, and she had no brother or sister living, and was far away from her original home, and among strangers), accepting her sorrowful lot, marrying another, thus entailing the possibility of no end of future misery, which in fact has at last come to pass."

"I never, for one moment," said Mr. Langston, "had the faintest doubt that the dear lady was cruelly sinned against, and that she had not herself to blame for anything that interfered with her peace of mind. Dear saint! her end was peace."

The other continued—

"The young lord, as I have said, married, and in due time succeeded to the title and estate. Children were born to him, but chiefly daughters. One or two boys died, and only one son remained, who is now, of course, in the estimation of all the world the heir. He is a fine, amiable, and accomplished man, of six or seven and twenty years of age, and married to an elegant and lovely woman, with a beautiful boy some two years old. But the father bore the load of his guilty secret in silence, year after year, till at last, laid low by severe disease, and racked with remorse, and fearing to die without making all the reparation in his power, he felt that he must make a clean breast of it. Happily for her, his countess was no longer liable to have her peace destroyed by any disclosures, for she had passed away years before. But the

consciousness that, in spite of all his cunning and success, accident might any day bring all to light, and overwhelm his innocent son and his lovely lady in the ghastly ruin of all their prospects, as well as rob them of their very name, took such an effect on him that, as I have said, he was obliged to seek relief in confidence, and so at last he told it to his clerical friend, and at his instance to his family lawyer. The clergyman looked at the case from a religious point of view, and was faithful to his highest sense of obligation, and insisted on the absolute necessity of doing right, whatever it might involve. The lawyer, from quite another point of view, coincided in this, as the only safe and certain way out of a most terrible entanglement.

"After repeated discussions and consultations it was felt to be indispensable to lay the facts before the hitherto-undoubted son and heir; who, as his father had long been declining in health, was already taking an active share in the management of the estates, which in all probability he would ere very long inherit. The miserable nobleman had known from the beginning of the birth of a son by the lady whom he had so basely deceived, and his natural anxiety had made him also keep himself informed about both mother and child. And thus, when the terrible news was broken to the young lord, it was coupled with the information that at the very latest time to which he could be traced, the legitimate, though unacknowledged son—that is myself—was living.

"I confine myself to a dry recital of the mere facts of the case as they were laid before me, some of them there in my tent one short stage this side of Damascus, and the rest subsequently, and of course I leave you to imagine the terrible shock thus given to the young lord. He is one of the noblest fellows I have ever met with, or even heard of; and, as soon as he had at all collected himself, he said at once, and insisted on it, that the son by the first and true wife must be sought out and brought back, whatever might be the result. This too the clergyman thought right. The lawyer, as he told me, for a time hesitated; he said that he felt he might well leave all moral considerations to his client and his spiritual adviser, and that it was his sole business to confine himself strictly to their legal interests. He accordingly laid plainly and forcibly before the young lord the fact that the original marriage was a secret, confined entirely to the breasts of only their four selves, viz., the old earl, the heir apparent, the clergyman, and himself; that the lady had died without ever betraying it; that the country clergyman of the remote district where it had been performed some five-and-thirty years ago had soon removed, and had died early; and that no mortal on earth knew anything of it. All the terrible conse-

quences of searching out and bringing there the son of the injured lady he pointed out, and refused to take a single step rashly, or without the maturest consideration. But the young Lord Furlie (that is the second title of the family) would not listen to any plea of policy, but to the voice of righteousness and honour only, and insisted on that being done which was right before God and man—right morally and right legally. And it also appeared that nothing could soothe the anguish of the miserable old man but the bringing back of the never-known son of the true wife of his youth. The young nobleman put right and truth in the first place; the lawyer hoped that, if he should discover the hitherto unacknowledged son, he might possibly be able to effect some compromise, and obtained a promise, which of course all were willing enough to make, that not a word should be breathed till the result could be known. For, you see, if only it had fortunately happened that I was no longer living, the difficulty might be got over, and inviolable secrecy be permanently maintained. So Mr. Finlay came to Bablyk-Hythe, where my poor mother last lived, and where she died; and, as you know, got out of you all the information he needed as to my probable whereabouts. The clergyman, though I scarcely know why, offered to accompany him, and, as I told you at the beginning, they found us yonder on the evening of the day before we should be entering Damascus. There, come, I think I have given you a pretty good opening of the case. But the trouble it has occasioned me, and I may say the distress, you can scarcely imagine."

"Marvellous!" exclaimed Mr. Langston, who was utterly confounded, and knew not what to say or think. But, after a pause, he asked—

"Were you not filled with amazement at the intimations you received, and the strange prospects which were thus opened before you?"

"Well," replied Sydney, "I cannot say I was so very greatly surprised. I always felt perfectly sure, as if by instinct or intuition, that there was some mystery to be solved, if not in this world then in another. And I was quite sure, from many little circumstances, that my mother's actual position was socially below the one she was not only fitted for, but, though of course I knew not how, entitled to. And as to the prospects, I confess I foresaw so much of grave difficulty, and so much of terrible evil possibly to some, and I so thoroughly shrank, and do still shrink, from any great change in my mode of life, that I can truly say I felt no elation whatever. In fact, I honestly think that, after the first feeling of surprise, the almost only and certainly predominant feeling was one of real and even deep

concern and regret. For I saw plainly enough that a heavy and, to me, most irksome burden of responsibility was devolved on me, and I saw no escape; and I also felt the deepest sympathy with the innocent sufferer from this terrible blow that had fallen on him, and was truly sorry in my very heart that the secret which had so long remained concealed had not remained so. Nor was Mr. Finlay very sanguine as to the way in which the labyrinth was to be threaded. But, heigho! I am tired. I should like a breath of the evening air. How long Edith stays at that Dorcas meeting! I think, if the ladies won't deem me an intruder, I'll go and fetch her home; and Graham can go on with the story if it please you both to pursue it. But, oh dear! I confess it often makes me sigh heavily enough; and I would give something for the pleasant tranquillity I had in the Desert before the strange arrival of the gentleman, whom you, my best friend, must needs put upon my trail."

So Mr. Sydney—for we must still call him by the old name, and indeed we shall never know him by any other—went to the Dorcas meeting, and, after chatting a few moments with the ladies, took Edith away. But of course it was not in human nature—that is, in human nature as it is supposed to reveal itself in some of those of the gentler sex who have retained their maiden names; some because still young and no time has been lost, others never expecting now to change the antiquated, and, in the present day, unmeaning title of spinster—I say it was hardly in human nature to allow the gentleman to carry off the minister's daughter without some mutual intimations of the noticeableness of the circumstance. There were first of all sundry little interchanges of glances, and infinitesimal facial changes, which said as plainly as words, "Heigho! what's in the wind now?" But in a very few moments the silent telegraphy was found insufficiently expressive.

"Upon my word!" exclaimed one ancient maiden, of sixty, with high cheek-bones, yellow parchment skin, thin lips, and husky voice, "Upon my word," she ejaculated, drawing herself up in stiff staidness, and pursing her mouth, "Miss Langston seems to hold herself quite at the service of that Mr. Sydney. 'Come, Edith,' and off they go!" And she gave her head a bit of a toss, as if her sense of maidenly decorum had been sadly outraged.

"That girl has quite lost her head, Miss Moppett, I think, since her poor mother's death. But there—she's mistress of the house now, you know; and she's Miss Langston!" The remark was made by a lady whose years might perhaps have entitled her to some consideration, but that somehow she did not appear to estimate them very greatly herself, for she did what she

could to repudiate them, and, in spite of all the warning tokens of the faithful glass, dressed herself like a young girl, "lamb-fashion," as some folks call it. And she stitched away at her work, as she spoke, with so much zeal—thinking, no doubt, of the poor for whom she was benevolently employed—that she pricked her finger over it, and gave utterance to an impatient ejaculation.

"What makes Miss Doney and Miss Moppett so peevish?" whispered a frank charming girl of eighteen, with clear blue eyes, to another of her own age. "For my part, I call Edith Langston one of the nicest girls I ever met with."

"And so do I," answered her companion, in another whisper. "And is not Mr. Sydney a gentlemanly man?"

"Well," said Miss Doney, in a low tone and confidential manner, to her friend Miss Moppett. "Well, it will be a great misfortune for Miss Langston if her poor father allows her to remain mistress of the house; that's what I have to say. Poor man! he must be so lonely; and what use is a chick like that?" And she sighed most pathetically as she thought of the forlornness of the worthy pastor.

Miss Moppett darted a look at her dear friend which would not certainly have conveyed to a spectator any idea of superabundant affection. But she replied in the same confidential tone—

"Oh, Mr. Langston will never give her a mother-in-law, you may be sure, my love. I've quite made up my mind to that." And now it was Miss Doney's turn to dart a glance at her dear friend, for she fancied she detected a sigh as Miss Moppett announced what she had made up her mind to.

"I am so glad our dear Mr. Langston has his two friends returned," said a lovable lady, quite as advanced in life as the two spinsters whose comments we have reported. "It must be such a comfort to him, and to that sweet girl who is all he has left to him. I thought he preached all the better for it on Sunday. What a beautiful sermon that was in the morning! It seemed almost to place me within the gates of the celestial city."

The lady who spoke—Mrs. St. John—had hair of silvery white, but her cheek was smooth and clear, with traces even of the ruddy. Every one who knew her pronounced her a Christian lady complete, and her presence alone was generally a sufficient restraint on the unlovely propensities of some of those who were associated with her. Yet it was not by design on her part. She was sweetly unconscious of her influence.

She had not addressed herself to anyone in particular at first, but, as she concluded, her mild beaming eye rested on Mrs. Kierney, who, feeling herself bound to reply, said—

"Well, I fancied—at least my husband did—that Mr. Langston was very morbid; and indeed we think he has been getting more so than ever of late."

Mrs. St. John turned a face full of mild wonder on the deacon's lady. If the latter had spoken in Hindoostanee it would not have been more incomprehensible to her. She looked most amiably puzzled, as she said—

"Morbid! my dear Mrs. Kierney? Our dear Mr. Langston morbid! Don't you think," she continued, half tentatively, as if she were trying to help the other to some word which would more correctly express her meaning, "don't you think you mistake for the signs of a diseased nature what are only the natural manifestations of a refined mind, with clear perceptions, and strong convictions, and warm and tender feelings? Who can be freer from a diseased self-consciousness than he? And I am sure any sorrow of other people's he feels as his own; and a wrong done to truth and righteousness is like a personal outrage to him, so keen are his sensibilities and sympathies. But this is not morbidness, my dear, surely?"

"Well, I don't pretend to know the difference," replied the other; "but, somehow, my husband says Mr. Langston's whole manner makes him very uncomfortable, and he does not sit at his ease in his pew of a Sunday."

"Dear me, Mrs. Kierney, how very strange!" said one of the young ladies whose kind comment on Edith Langston we have quoted. "Mr. Kierney cannot sit comfortably in his pew! Can't he change it for another then?"

Mrs. Kierney gave the "young puss"—as she inwardly called her—a look that the frank open-browed girl bore very innocently. But her companion said to her in a whisper, "Perhaps the poor man has boils!" and forthwith the two were seized with inward convulsions that threatened I know not what serious consequences.

Mrs. St. John turned on them a countenance so full of tender concern, and almost alarm, that it just put the finishing stroke to the work of their own fancy, and rendered utterly nugatory all their attempts at repression, and so out there came such an explosion of laughter as proved contagious to all except the deacon's lady (who was full of pent-up feelings of quite another kind), and the two severely maiden ladies above referred to, and that simple-hearted Mrs. St. John, who was perfectly bewildered.

"My dears! what is the matter?" she asked; and presently one of the laughing graces tried to explain that "Miss Berry had said that perhaps the reason poor Mr. Kierney could not sit comfortably was—that—that—." She could get no farther; but another, who had caught the whispered suggestion, tittering,

and ready to follow the example of the other, said, "Perhaps Mr. Kierney had boils!" And at the word the room rang again. But poor Mrs. St. John looked so full of concern, and the Misses Moppett and Doney so full of spite, and Mrs. Kierney so full of resentment, that the unseemly mirth came quickly to an end. And the latter lady soon took her departure, and, in her report to her liege lord, contrived somehow or other most ingeniously to connect the outburst with "that Edith Langston" and her father. And indeed it must be admitted that if she had not gone off as she did with "that Mr. Sydney," it is highly improbable that "that Miss Berry" would have been led to express herself so unbecomingly. And so, as is sure to be the case with all Kierney natures, the little Dorcas-meeting episode added to the deacon's dislike of the minister, and intensified the conviction that, in the interests of "piety," it was time something was done.

Meanwhile, more than one of the ladies wondered within herself whether or not Edith Langston and Mr. Sydney would take the shortest way home to the Gables. And Miss Moppett and Miss Doney actually felt so tender an interest in the dear girl, that, quite unawares, they went considerably out of their way, and by-and-by found themselves in front of Mr. Langston's house, and had the satisfaction of finding their suspicions confirmed; for, as they turned away, who should come up but the very pair they were so interested in!

"Will you walk in, ladies?" said Edith, cheerily, on finding them so far from their own home, and at the door almost of the Gables.

"Not to-night;" they replied both together, a little huffed at being found there.

"Disagreeable girl!" said Miss Moppett to her friend, when they were alone.

"Forward chit!" responded the other, pettishly.

"A fine thing for a young lady to be walking out late of evenings like that;" remarked the first.

"Well, all's well that ends well, my dear; that's all I say;" replied the second, in a tone that intimated, however, that ending well was not exactly what she desired in her heart. But peace be with them both, poor sour things! Who knows what they might have been if their paths of life had been sunnier?

(To be continued.)

NOTES ON INSPIRATION.

II.—DO THE SCRIPTURES CLAIM AN INFALLIBLE INSPIRATION?

WHETHER is it more honourable to the Bible to say, "After due examination, I so firmly believe the Scriptures to contain the Word of God, that I will cheerfully believe whatever they tell me about themselves;" or to say, "After reading this Book for many years, I have formed a theory about it, and shall only believe just so much as accords with my theory?" As to the verbal answer to this question there can, I suppose, be no sort of doubt. Every one will admit that it is more consistent and more reverent to let God's Word speak for itself than to make it speak our thought. But the practical answer given to this question by many good persons hardly squares with their verbal answer. They do not let the Bible speak for itself. They make it speak in support of their theory. And their theory is, That every word in the Bible is true, whoever speaks it; that all the Scriptures stand on the same level; that if any word or writing does not sound very wise, as, for instance, Agur's proverbs, it must be spiritualized into wisdom; that if any word or writing sounds immoral, as, for instance, David's elaborate vindictive curses on his enemies, it must be deftly tortured into accordance with our modern conceptions of morality; and, finally, that what are known as "the cardinal doctrines of the Gospel" must be found in every chapter, even though it was written many centuries before the Advent. This is, to say the least of it, a very popular and widespread conception of the Bible; and there are very many who not only handle the Word of God thus misleadingly, but actually lay claim to a special orthodoxy because they make the Word of God speak the thought of man!

Now it may help us wisely to deny and traverse this monstrous claim if we ask, What is the story which the Bible has to tell of itself?

Briefly stated, the answer to this question would, I think, run somewhat thus. The Bible is a literature; a library rather than a book. It contains the works of probably more than a hundred authors. It records the histories, and often the very sayings, of many hundreds of men. It is divided into more than sixty separate books, each of which demands separate and profound study. For these books were written at different periods

through two thousand years, and their outward form was determined by the age in which each of them was written. Their authors were of all classes, from the king on his throne to the captive in his dungeon, from the high priest to the chorister, from the sage who had mastered all the wisdom [of his day to the simple shepherd who had only his mother-wit; and the personal character of the authors is reflected in their modes of thought and speech. Some of them wrote songs, some collected proverbs; some uttered oracles and some prophecies; some recorded historical facts, and others wrote letters to distant friends.

Here, then, we have a large, various, complex literature; and to me it is, I confess, matter for growing surprise that almost every man one meets quietly assumes that he has mastered a literature so ancient, complex, difficult; and that he can both interpret it for himself and pronounce authoritative judgments on any interpretation of it which he may chance to hear. We all acknowledge that to master the dozen leading poets and historians whose works have come down to us from classic Greece and Rome, so as to be able to pronounce just and valuable opinions about them, is the task of a lifetime. Nay, we know very well that to master the score of books which might be selected as representing the highest English literature from the time when English began to be written down to the present day is a task for which many years of strenuous labour would not suffice; that it involves an accurate knowledge of the times in which the authors lived, and the modes of thought and turns of speech prevalent in those times—a knowledge, too, of the characteristic qualities of the men, and of the special circumstances that surrounded them and by which they were trained. We confess that had we acquired all this laborious knowledge, we should only have studied twenty books, and covered some four hundred years. And yet so foolish are we, that we often take for granted our competence to speak dogmatically of *a literature that runs through two thousand years* of which we know very little, *contained in sixty books* few of which we have carefully studied, *and expressed in two ancient languages* of neither of which, perhaps, we know a single word!

The assumption is so arrogant, that the very moment we fairly state it, we are ashamed of it: while we are so incompetent, we feel that we have no right to form any theory of Inspiration, much less to force our crude theories down the Church's throat. We are content to take the attitude of children who need to be taught, and to sit at the feet of Holy Scripture asking it questions and listening reverently to its replies. And there is one singularly happy consequence of taking this attitude. We shall be too busy with our lessons needlessly to intermeddle with a controversy

beyond our strength ; but, having thrown off the incumbrance of dogma and prejudice, we shall be all the stronger for any conflict with Doubt which we cannot honourably evade. All we now affirm of the Bible amounts to this :—Here is a large and varied literature of which we know very little as yet ; but it reveals truths which commend themselves to our conscience and satisfy our profoundest spiritual needs. The men whom God moved to write these books were men, perhaps, and not faultless monsters. Some of them possibly were not very wise, as, for instance, Asaph and Agur ; some not very good, as, for instance, Balaam and Jonah ; and others, though splendidly endowed and of a gracious heart, fell into grievous follies and sins, as, for instance, David and Solomon ; but they were all moved by God—moved to give a sincere and accurate account of what truth they knew or He revealed. They may have known only in part ; we suppose they did till that which was perfect came. They may have made mistakes, and lapsed into the bondage of sinful lusts ; the Bible says they did, *they* say so too. Still, the light of wisdom grows more resplendent and the moral life more pure, till they culminate in Him who was the perfect Truth and the Life indeed. And, therefore, we are very sure that this is God's Word ; and that His purpose in gathering up this Sacred Literature through two thousand years was, that He might put into our hands a sufficient guide to life and immortality.

And *now* if any object, "Moses is not quite accurate in his science—is he?" or, "The figures in the historical books are very much exaggerated,—are they not?" or, "The morality of this curse is bad;" or, "The text of that passage is corrupt:" we can cheerfully reply, "The questions you raise, gentlemen, are of infinite interest. We shall be very happy to go into them with you so soon as we are competent. Meantime, our faith does not depend on the correctness of Moses' science, or the accuracy of a census, or the morality of a curse, or the authenticity of this passage or that; but on the large results and general conclusions to which every book contributes. Prove errors of detail, and we will frankly admit them, and thank you for proving them. And, perhaps, when you and we can view the Bible as a whole, and can duly fit every separate scripture into the general scheme of Divine Truth, we may discover that, just as the bad actions of good men, so also the imperfect conceptions of wise men were recorded for our instruction. But even now already we can surely consent in the conclusion, that Divine Thoughts uttered through human words, that Eternal Truth expressing itself in forms of time, that these, working through an imperfect but growing medium, must humble themselves to

many limitations, must adapt themselves to the comprehension and need of the several generations to which they disclose themselves; must therefore grow more full and pure as man and his word advance toward purity and completeness, and can only perfectly disclose their perfect glory when, by partial yet ever enlarging disclosures, they have raised man to the full height of his stature in Christ."

Now, supposing our only theory of Inspiration to be that we will have no theory till we are wiser; supposing that we are content to begin at the beginning, and hear what the Scriptures themselves have to say:—What have they to tell us of their own inspiration? Very much less, I think,—I am afraid, very much other—than we commonly assume. Often as we use the word "inspiration," the Bible only uses it twice. And as though to set us on the right line of thought and inquiry, while the word is once used in a technical sense, it is also used once in a general sense. St. Paul, writing to Timothy, assures him that "all scriptures, *inspired* of God, are profitable for instruction, for conviction, for correction, and for discipline in righteousness:" and here, no doubt, he implies that certain scriptures, or writings, are inspired. Elihu, speaking to Job, affirms, "There is a spirit in man, and the *inspiration* of the Almighty giveth him understanding:" and here the word is used in a more general sense, and asserts, not that certain writings, but that all men, have the breath or inspiration of God. The word occurs in no other place; but its use in these two places and senses is very significant. For it suggests that the inspiration of Scripture is only one of the modes in which the Spirit of God reveals Himself; and if we can discover what is characteristic of His activity in other modes, that may help us to understand His action in this mode.

The Inspired Word, then, affirms the inspiration of universal man. It is the breath of the Almighty which gives him understanding. Is the understanding of man perfect? Are its decisions infallible? If not, and experience only too sadly affirms that they are not, here is at least one mode of inspiration which does not carry infallibility with it.

But it may be said, "The inspiration which gives men understanding is general, and therefore imperfect; when it becomes special and individual, it also becomes perfect and infallible." It would be difficult to put this argument into a syllogism that would pass muster in the schools; nevertheless, as it expresses a common thought, let us look at it, and ask what the Scriptures have to say on *special* inspiration. One of the earliest instances of this special divine influence is that of Bezaleel, the son of Uri. Great stress and emphasis are laid on the fulness, the

completeness of his inspiration. Many verses of the Book of Exodus are occupied with descriptions of the special and wonderful force of his gift; many chapters are filled with a narrative of the various works he wrought while the divine inspiration was upon him. "*I have filled him,*" says the Lord Jehovah, "*with the Spirit of God,* in wisdom, and understanding, and knowledge." These are great words to be spoken of any even the most gifted of men: and Moses echoes and repeats them in many forms as though reluctant to quit his theme. "*Who was Bezaleel?* and *what* was he inspired to do?" Bezaleel was the artist who planned and built the sacred Tabernacle. He was inspired "to devise cunning works in gold, in silver, and in bronze, in cutting of precious stones and in carving of timber," and in designing the gorgeous vestments of the Aaronic priests. Like the great Italian artists of Raphael and Cellini's time, he was master of all the arts of his day, and could plan a noble structure, or cut a gem, mould a cast, or chase a flagon, or invent a dress of state. He was filled with wisdom and the Holy Spirit, that he might "devise curious works" and do "all manner of" artistic "workmanship." But was he therefore infallible? Did he never correct a design, or press the edge of his chisel or graver too deeply? Was he in very deed infallible, and did his infallibility extend to every part of every one of his curious works? It is incredible. It would have demanded a series of miracles no less stupendous than the plagues by which the bondage of Egypt was broken; and the object of the miracles would have been, not the redemption of a nation, but the degradation of a wise gifted man into a mere automaton, a mere machine.

Glance at another of these "divers operations" of one and the self-same Spirit. The prophets had, as St. Peter asserts, the Spirit of Christ, and often searched—for *they* at least were neither omniscient nor infallible—"what the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify;" they saw through a glass darkly, dim shadows moving before them whose meaning and relations they could not fully apprehend. But if they had the Spirit of Christ, so also have we, if we are in Christ: for "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." "Ye are sanctified," writes St. Paul to the Corinthian converts, "by the Spirit of God." Inspired! we are more than inspired, we are *inhabited* by the Holy Spirit; "Know ye not that ye are the temples of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" But are we therefore infallible? were the Corinthian converts? Is our sanctification complete? was theirs? If it were, and is, why does St. Paul exhort and rebuke them? why are we so foolish and sinful and divided? Of all good men we are com-

pelled to admit that they inspire, that they possess, the Spirit of God; that He dwells in them as of old time He dwelt in the temple, a central illuminating hallowing Glory. But they are not therefore perfect; they grieve and resist the Holy Spirit by whom they are sanctified. And if His work as Sanctifier may be limited and impeded by the thwarting weaknesses of men, why may not His work as Inspirer and Teacher?

We have, then, the authority of Scripture itself for the conclusion, that men may be both inspired and sanctified by the good wise Spirit of God, and yet remain imperfect both in their knowledge and in their obedience. If the general inspiration of universal man does not make his understanding perfect; if the special inspiration of those of old time did not convey an absolute accuracy of thought and action; if in this new time, and with the enlightening sanctifying energies of the Holy Spirit, we know but in part, and do not live out even that we know;—it is very certain that infallibility is not an invariable characteristic or result of the work of the Spirit; it cannot be an inseparable adjunct of Inspiration.

Still it will be felt, and rightly felt, that the writers of the New Testament may claim, even if they do not claim it, a far higher degree of inspiration than was vouchsafed to Bezaleel, or is accorded to us. And therefore we must ask, first, What are the facts of the case? are their Scriptures absolutely free from error? and, secondly, Do they claim for themselves the infallibility which many claim for them?

1. Are the New Testament Scriptures, as matter of fact, infallible? It is impossible, I think, for any ingenuous student, unless misled by a foregone conclusion, to affirm that they are. The mistakes and discrepancies alleged, for instance, against the Four Gospels are not of any great moment, unless we give them moment by our foolish inadequate theories. Some of them may no doubt be accounted for by errors of transcription, or be reconciled by a profounder exegesis. But there are others which cannot be thus accounted for—errors and contradictions which, while they do not disprove the inspiration of the Sacred Records, do very certainly disprove their infallibility.

For example, the Genealogies of our Lord, given respectively by St. Matthew and St. Luke, are an old ground of battle with the critics. The most ingenious and the most disingenuous artifices have been employed to reconcile them; but they remain, and must always remain, unreconciled. In St. Matthew's genealogy, many names are altogether omitted, apparently because the pedigree from which he copied had been divided by some pedantic scribe into three periods of fourteen generations—each fourteen being the double of seven, and therefore a doubly

sacred number—and could only be arranged in this sacred symmetrical order by the omission of some of the least known names. It would almost seem that this scribe must have been wilfully inaccurate—for with the Old Testament before him, he could hardly skip three generations at once, as in one place he does,* without knowing it—in order that he might write at the foot of the pedigree, “So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, and from David to the migration into Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the migration into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.” The inaccuracies multiply and are more pronounced when we compare the genealogy given by St. Luke with that of St. Matthew. According to Matthew, Joseph, the putative father of Jesus, was the son of Jacob: according to Luke, Joseph was the son of Heli; and from this point, from Joseph’s father right away up through thirty generations to David, none of the names given in the genealogies correspond, or can be made to correspond, except only two. Is it credible that any profound research or plausible hypothesis will ever reconcile so wide a disagreement as this? Do we gain anything but distrust by denying that it exists, or by concealing its existence? What is Joseph to us that we should very much care whether his pedigree be accurately or inaccurately written down? Dare we, for the sake of any theory, deny an obvious fact? St. Matthew, inspired to write a history of the Lord Jesus Christ, may very well have been content “to trace all things,” as St. Luke expresses it, “from their source;” and if he received the pedigree from good authority may have inserted it as the best to be had. It is only our notion, that an inspired man was necessarily an infallible man, which makes the errors in the pedigree of any grave importance.

There are other discrepancies in the Gospels. The best known and most commonly alleged are these: Matthew places our Lord’s visit to the country of the Gadarenes *before* he (Matthew) was called from the receipt of custom; Mark and Luke place it *after* the call. Matthew tells us that Jesus found *two* demoniacs among the tombs of Gadara, and cast them out of the men into the swine: Mark and Luke tell us of only *one* demoniac. Matthew tells us, that as the Lord was *going out* of Jericho, He healed *two* blind men who were sitting by the way-side: Luke tells us only that He healed *one*, and that as He was *drawing nigh* to the city, not as He left it: Mark agrees and disagrees with each of the other Evangelists; for he tells us, with Luke, that there was *one* blind man, though Matthew says there were *two*, and agrees with Matthew that the cure was wrought as Jesus *went out* of the city, though Luke says it was wrought

* Kings Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah are omitted from their proper place in the genealogy, viz., between Joram and Ozias.—Matt. i. 81.

as He *went in* to the city. Were all three of these inspired men infallible? If they were, how did they slip even into these slight trivial errors?

2. Nay: Do they themselves claim infallibility, or teach that men full of the Holy Spirit are thereby exempted from error? I can find no trace of such teaching, or such a claim; while I find many express claims to inspiration, and many hints that their inspiration was limited by the infirmities which cleave even to the best of men, and to all they say or do.

Take, for instance, the case of Stephen. Stephen, we are told, was "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost;" he made proof of his inspiration both by doing "great wonders and miracles among the people," and by arguing against gainsayers with such eloquence and force that "they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit with which he spake." When carried before the Sanhedrin and accused by suborned witnesses on a false charge, we are once more told that "he was *full of the Holy Ghost*," insomuch that his very judges, "looking stedfastly at him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." Stephen, then, was specially and fully inspired. Was he therefore infallible? His defence before the Sanhedrin contains at least two clear historical blunders, and two assertions either so general or so specific as to be inexact. Stephen says that Abraham migrated from Chaldea to Charran "*when his father was dead*;" the Book of Genesis says that Abraham migrated to Charran *sixty years before his father died*. Stephen says that Abraham bought "*a burial place in Sychem, of Emmor the father of Sychem*;" the Book of Genesis says that Abraham bought the burial place *in Hebron, of Ephron the Hittite*, and that it was his grandson Jacob who bought a field of Emmor, in Sychem—a field in which to pitch his tent, not a burying place for his dead. Stephen says that "*threescore and fifteen souls*" of the Hebrew family went down into Egypt; Moses says "*threescore and ten*." Stephen says that the children of Israel sojourned in Egypt "*four hundred years*;" Moses says "*four hundred and thirty years*." These are very obvious discrepancies and contradictions. Is it of any use to deny them? If we close our eyes to them, will critics and sceptics be smitten blind? If we do not admit them, and tell our children or our congregations of them, will they not hear of them from those who will put a false construction on them, and who will handle them with an injurious effect which they could never have had but for our reticence or dishonesty? Is it not both our wisdom and our duty so to conceive of the Holy Scriptures as that errors such as these shall not shake or touch our faith? And, after all, these errors are so trivial that, unless we make them of moment by thrusting a claim of infallibility into the Bible, they would have

hardly any force. They are easily accounted for, if it be thought worth while to account for them. The Jews used a Greek translation of the Hebrew Testament, just as we use an English translation of the Greek Testament. The Septuagint was full of blunders, as we may see for ourselves. Stephen quoted from this Greek version, and not direct from the Hebrew Scriptures. And the Holy Spirit was given to him, not that he might correct the false readings of the Septuagint, but that he might preach Christ and Him crucified; that he might pierce the hearts of his judges by demonstrations of the aversion to the present truth of God shown by them and their fathers before them; and that he might be lifted above the reach of their malice, opposing his pure angel face to their malignant lusts and passions.

Take, too, the case of Peter. Beyond all question Peter was inspired of God. But was even he infallible? Nay, for, despite his inspiration, he fell into grave errors of doctrine and morality. For ten years, he, who had been commanded to preach the Gospel to every creature through all the world, thought it right, "being a Jew, not to keep company with, or visit, or teach, one of another nation." Was not that a grave misconception of duty on the part of an inspired man? At last, the Spirit sends him a vision to correct his mistake—talks with him on the tanner's house-top at Joppa. Is he not in the Spirit now—when all heaven is opening before him and the Holy Spirit speaks with him face to face? Yet when the Holy Spirit commands, "Rise, Peter, kill and eat," does he obey? Instead of obeying, he argues and objects, "By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything common or unclean." Where is his infallibility now? For, ten years after the conversion of Cornelius, Peter, his scruples being silenced, obeys the Divine command, and accounts the Gentiles no more common or unclean; then, "*for fear of the Jews,*" he disobeys the command, and withdraws from the Gentile converts. Is this an infallible man? Is dissimulation, is disobedience, no sin? At all events St. Paul thought it was; for when he met Peter at Antioch, he "withstood him to his face" as one "self-condemned." Nay more, he charges him with "dissimulation," or—as the word should be rendered—"hypocrisy," and with "not walking uprightly." Here, then, we come upon two inspired men as they stand face to face? How do they meet and bear themselves? Do they fall to complimenting each other on their infallibility? No; *inspired Paul condemns inspired Peter* as guilty both of heresy and immorality; he is giving countenance to a false doctrine—a doctrine fatal to the truth of Christ, and he is countenancing it by hypocrisy and unrighteousness. They are both inspired, but can they both be infallible? It is incredible—impossible. If

we say that Peter was right, we must allow that Paul was grievously in the wrong; if we say that Paul was right, we must allow that Peter was wrong—as indeed he afterwards admitted himself to be.

Now any theory of Inspiration worth holding must cover and explain all these Biblical facts, and many more. The least we can demand of it is, that it should cover and explain—(1) the general inspiration of universal man, that inspiration of the Almighty which gives him understanding; (2) the special inspiration of men of artistic genius, such as Bezaleel; (3) the illuminating and sanctifying inspiration vouchsafed to all who believe in Christ; and (4) that peculiar inspiration which is the distinctive feature of the canonical Scriptures. Such a theory I will try to give in the next and concluding chapter.

LENNARD,

LAZARUS QUESTIONED.

Few thoughtful readers of St. John's Gospel can have realized the return of Lazarus from the unseen world without the idea, at least, presenting itself, that it would have been a marvellous privilege to have enjoyed his confidence, and to have conversed with him about his strange experiences. And yet it was left for a poet of our own days to give utterance, in a poem that the world will never let die, to thoughts and feelings which we all share in common.

* * * * *

“ ‘Where wert thou, brother, those four days?’
 There lives no record of reply,
 Which telling what it is to die
 Had surely added praise to praise.

“ ‘From every house the neighbours met,
 The streets were filled with joyful sound,
 A solemn gladness even crown'd
 The purple brows of Olivet.

“ ‘Behold a man raised up by Christ!
 The rest remaineth unreveal'd;
 He told it not; or something seal'd
 The lips of that Evangelist.’—*In Memoriam*, xxxi.

Professor Plumptre availed himself, we think, of a perfectly legitimate means of expressing certain thoughts with which he knew many minds to be labouring, when he made Lazarus the

chief interlocutor in a thoughtful poem, whose object is mainly didactic.*

Little is known of the man whom the word of Christ summoned back from Hades. But much that is very plausible weaves in very well with what tradition delivers, and Professor Plumptre has known how to work it into a consistent whole. Our space compels us, however, to refer our readers to his article on Lazarus, in Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible." It must suffice to say here, by way of introduction, that, in the poem, Lazarus is found at Massilia (Marseilles), to which place he had early retired, with his sisters, after his resurrection. Jochanan (John), the venerable Father now of the Churches in Asia Minor, has sent to him the robber youth whom he had reclaimed, in order that the terrible strife of his soul may be set at rest, if it please God, by the manner in which such a man of unique experience might be able to deal with him. In the First Part they meet, and each tells his tale, and the youth derives the particular blessing Jochanan had anticipated. In the Second Part, the youth seeks a second interview, for the sake of having, if possible, certain deep questions that perplex him cleared up. And we think our readers will agree with us, that there are topics which under some aspects can be better handled in verse than in any other way. No one ever wished that Pope, for instance, had written his "Essay on Man" in prose.

We give the Second Part almost entire, believing that those of our readers who do not possess the volume will be glad to have it. But we should not have ventured thus to print several consecutive pages, if we had not been favoured with the kind permission of the accomplished author, for which ready courtesy we beg to offer him our warm and respectful acknowledgments.

The morning came, and then they met once more,
The grey-haired saint, whose second path of life
Was near its end, and he, in youth's full strength,
The wanderer seeking truth, and light, and help.
They both had told their story, and their hearts
Were opened, and, as face doth answer face,
So talked they freely, mirroring the thoughts
Each of the other. And the younger spake:—
"Thy words, my father, dwell within my soul,
Like fire that burns and cleanses. For myself,
The path is clear, the way that leads to God,
Through tears, and dread, and darkness; evermore
To bear within my heart His perfect law,
His Word that cleaves the secret depths of life;
To conquer self, renounce the glittering world,
My life being hid with Christ. And, if alone

* *Lazarus, and other Poems*, by E. H. Plumptre, M.A. Second Edition. London: Strahan. 1865.

I stood, or strove, as those who run their race,
 To win my prize, regardless of the rest,
 This were enough. But as I walked last eve
 Massilia's streets, far other thoughts than these
 Came thronging on me. From this holy shade
 Wherein thou liv'st I passed to Babel's glare,
 Mad songs of riot, words of shameless lust,
 Foul misery plunging into fouler mire,
 Hard toiling men, their day of labour done,
 Sleeping brute-sleep, to whom no vision comes
 Of life full-orbed, or God's o'erstretching Love.
 And, as I looked and thought, the question grew
 Clear and distinct, and would not be denied,
 Which never till thy word had changed my life
 I dreamed of asking.—These poor wandering sheep,
 What have they done that they should pass away
 To those dark shadows of the drear abyss?
 They do the world's rough work, they delve and toil,
 None caring for their souls, and pass away
 Without one ray of light that falls on us,
 Without one hope that looks beyond the grave.
 These harlot-girls who flaunt along the streets
 With pencilled brows, and filmy saffron vests,
 And warbled song, and winning, wanton dance;
 These boys with gleaming eyes and golden hair,
 Their waving locks all wet with odorous nard,
 Who, knowing not the baseness, stain their youth;
 These Gauls and Thracians, torn from distant shores,
 Herding, like brutes, by hundreds in their dens,
 Butchered when Rome makes merry;—all the crowds
 That throng the marts, the ships, the camps of men,
 What future lies before them? Must I think
 That one great torrent sweeps them on to Hell?—
 That they who never heard the name of God,
 Nor knew His righteous will, shall first awake
 To that clear knowledge in the hopeless fires?
 I look around, and here and there I see
 One lonely soul who struggles after truth:
 But, far and wide, the thousands live and die,
 Unknowing of the greatness of their lives;
 And when I travel o'er the tracts of space,
 Or look behind me on the expanse of time,
 The same drear vision meets me. And I ask,
 'Can this be all that Christ has come to win?
 Is this the bruising of the serpent's head?
 Is this the triumph of the victor's car?
 Sees He in this the travail of His soul,
 And with it rests content?' I spoke but now
 Of men and women who have lived their lives;
 But what of all the myriad souls that pass
 Their few short hours on earth, and then are gone?
 That child of harlot-mother, born in sin
 And left to perish;—has God's gift of life
 For those few pain-fraught moments, brought on it
 The woe that runs through all the endless years?
 Or if you tell me that His Love is wide,

That infants whom His Church receives are saved,
 Cleansed by the healing waters, then I ask,
 Can all the future age of woe or weal
 Turn on that chance which it nor knows nor cares
 To ask for, or refuse? Or if, once more,
 You tell me of a Love diviner still,
 Embracing all, baptized or infidel,
 To whom death comes as infant's gentle sleep,
 Then subtle questioning brings the doubt again ;

* * * * *

Woe is me !

I tremble, Oh, my father ! as I speak
 The thoughts that haunt me. In thine eyes, perchance,
 They seem too bold. They trespass on the ground
 Where men must walk in darkness. But to thee
 I open all my heart, for thou hast seen
 What others have not. Thou canst meet my doubt,
 And tell me of Gehenna ; thou must know
 The armies of the lost, and of the saved ;
 And therefore blame me not, if I, in words
 All rough and hasty, bring those doubts to thee."

He ceased ; and then the old man looked on him,
 Not with uplifted hands, and brow that told
 Of holy horror, but with wistful thought,
 Admiring, pitying, loving. And he spake :
 " Fear not, my son, to tell me all thy soul.
 Thy doubt outspoken may perchance pass on
 To purer faith. The fault that saps the life
 Is doubt half-crushed, half-veiled ; the lip-assent
 Which finds no echo in the heart of hearts ;
 The secret lie, which conscious of its guilt,
 Atones for falsehood by intenser zeal.
 These questionings of thine, I know them all,
 And know they come but as the signs of life.
 Our Rabbis heed them not. They read and pray,
 Debating in their synagogues and schools ;
 Detecting this man's faults, and grudging that
 The honour he has earned. They little care
 What happens to the crowd. They look with scorn
 Upon that crowd, ' the people of the earth ; '
 Filling high places at the feasts of men,
 They count on higher at the feast of God,
 And that suffices. But from thee, my son,
 Far be that poor content. Speak out thy thought,
 As Abraham spoke it, when he asked of God,
 ' Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right ? '
 As Job, when, smarting in his sore distress,
 He claimed acquittal. I condemn thee not ;
 And yet, my son, I cannot grant thy prayer,
 I cannot solve the problems of thy soul.
 In those few days I passed beyond the veil
 I learnt to know myself, to fear and love
 The Lord my Maker ; but that lore sufficed.
 I could not rise to yon supernal height
 Whence all the wonder of the world is seen,

And all the ages in their ordered plan.
 That secret dawns not on the new-born life;
 The mystery of God remains uncleared;
 Into these things the angels seek to look,
 Yet see not far. Let others dream their dreams,
 Map out the world of Hades, mark the lines,
 As though they knew the country, I, for one,
 Must own I know it not; and if I speak
 As one whose eyes are opened, know, the Light
 Shines on me from within. No fearful forms
 Of spectral horrors float before mine eyes,
 But Christ, my Lord, has led me on to truth;
 His Spirit quickens all my power to see.

And yet, my son, it may be that thou ask'st,
 Not wisely of this matter. I have known,
 Ere now, that craving. Many eyes have looked
 Across the abyss, and many lips have asked,
 With varying accents, 'Are the saved ones few?'
 Some seek that knowledge in their pride of heart,
 As finding greater glory in the thought
 Of crowds beneath them, failing where they win;
 And some in selfish fear lest place should fail
 For them in heaven; and some, my son, like thee,
 In wistful love and pity. But to none
 Is the full answer given: and, evermore,
 The veil, uplifted for a moment's space,
 Falls once again, and hides the rest from view.
 So was it once when Christ our Master taught,
 And one came eager, asking as thou ask'st,
 And answer found: 'Strive thou to enter in,
 For straight the gate and narrow is the way
 That leads to life.' So was it once again;
 When Cephas, asking of Jochanan's fate,
 Received his answer, 'What is that to thee?'
 He bids us walk by faith and not by sight;
 He bids us trust his all-embracing love,—
 His Father's righteous purpose.

Yet enough
 He taught to put to shame our narrowing hearts,
 And quicken wider hopes. From out the Book,
 Where Scribes and Rabbis find abounding proof
 That they alone may call the Lord their God,
 He read the tokens of a love that streams
 On Jew and Gentile, over bad and good,
 As shines the sun in heaven. And thence he told
 Of outcasts who had sought the light of God;
 Of heathens, whom Jehovah owned as His;
 The Syrian leper, cleansed in Jordan's flood;
 Sarepta's widow with her cruse of oil;
 The men of Nimrod's city, crouching low
 In dust and ashes at the prophet's word;
 The queen, who, coming from the furthest south,
 Communed with David's son of all the thoughts
 Deep, wide, and wondrous, that had stirred her heart:
 And thus, through all His life He gave us proof,
 While working still by self-imposed law

Within a narrower limit, that His heart
 Went forth to all. He shrank not from the touch
 Of harlot's hands, or flood of harlot's tears;
 He turned not back when that adulterous wife
 At Jacob's well spoke with him, went and dwelt
 For two whole days within Samaria's gates.
 When that poor outcast of a cursed race
 Came, kneeling in her woe, and found at first
 Reluctance, silence, sternness, yet the change
 Came soon; His eye had read her secret soul,
 And all she asked He gave. The soldier rough,
 Trained in Rome's legions to a life of war,
 Was owned by Him as having nobler faith
 Than we of Israel. Yea, the words went forth:
 'From east and west, from north and south, shall come
 Thousands, and tens of thousands, sitting down
 With Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, at the feast
 Of God's great kingdom.' Bolder, stronger still,
 He drew two pictures of that last great day:
 On one side stood the greatest of our Scribes,
 Honoured and trusted, rigorous in their fasts,
 Punctual in prayers, and paying tithes of all;
 And, on the other, those whose names we loathe,
 The dwellers of the Cities of the Vale,
 The men of Tyre and Sidon, sunk, as they,
 In pride, and lust, and baseness. 'And for these,'
 So ran the words, 'shall be the lighter doom,
 The fewer stripes, the easier pain and loss;
 For those, the outer darkness, and the wail
 Of sharpest woe.' And then, my son, He told
 What oft has given me comfort when the ills,
 Like those thou speak'st of, haunt and vex my soul,—
 Words which lift up one corner of the veil,
 And show Hope's brighter vision—'lighter doom';
 So spake He; 'for had they too seen my works,
 And heard my words, in sackcloth and in dust
 Long since they had repented.' Wondrous words!
 Which none might speak but He the Judge of all,
 Who sees the inner depths of each man's heart,
 And calls the things that are not into life,
 Counting as though they were. He sees the gleams
 Of better thoughts across the murkiest gloom,
 The seeds of good amid the howling wastes,
 And perfects them at last; and, in the depths
 Of His divine forbearance, suffereth long,
 And passeth by transgression. Those who wait
 To meet the bridegroom, they must trim their lamps,
 And seek the oil from heaven; and those who own
 Him Master, and from Him their gifts receive,
 Must bring their talents—ten, or five, or one—
 With usury to their Lord. But that vast throng,
 The multitude of peoples, nations, tongues,
 Shall stand before His throne, and every act
 Of human kindness He will own as His,
 And crown as service rendered unto Him.
 Oh! doubt not, then, my son, but fight thy way

In clearer faith against bewildering fears.
 Believe that He who in His pitying love
 Embraced the children (not of saintly sire,
 Or wise, or mighty, but the low-born babes
 Of peasant mothers, whom the cleansing flood
 Of baptism never reached), and laid His hands,
 Mighty to bless, upon their infant heads;
 Doubt not that He looks on, embracing still
 All new-born souls that taste the breath of life.
 That child of harlot-mother, in His sight
 Who judges all, is precious as the babe
 Which slumbers peaceful in the enfolding arms
 Of saintliest matron. Nor do years alone
 Determine childhood. Those who live and die,
 Children in knowledge, ignorant, and blind;
 Children in spirit, simple, kind, and true;
 Children in temper, wayward, changeful, weak;
 These, too, He pities, these He seeks to bless;
 Their angels stand as highest near the throne:
 So evermore His sentence overturns
 Our feebler judgment. Outcasts, whom thou spurn'st,
 Shall stand before their God arrayed in white,
 And sing for joy, the last become the first;
 And Rabbis, saints, and teachers, if they hope
 For pardon and for peace, must take their place
 Low down with shame, the first become the last.
 So in the end the eternal truth will shine;
 So at the last the mists and clouds will clear:
 Till then from out the cloud there comes the voice
 Which speaks in trumpet-tones through every land:
 'O house of Israel! O thou Church of God!
 O parties, sects, disputers! own ye not
 Your ways unequal, Mine all just and true?'

Yet once again, half-shamed to speak again,
 Pausing as one who, having asked for help,
 And gained it, fears, though wanting more, to ask,
 The seeker uttered all his deep desire.
 "Thy words give comfort, Father: I can look
 With less despair on those poor heathen souls
 That throng around me. I can now believe,
 As my dear master taught me, that the death
 Of Christ our Lord availed for all the world
 To purchase peace and pardon. I can feel
 One common bond of brotherhood with all:
 They too are ransomed, and the light that shines
 On us illumines them. And yet there floats
 (Bear with me, Father, if I speak it out)
 A vague, dim doubt around me. Deem not, then,
 My thoughts too bold or subtle; but there comes
 This question, and I cannot find reply:—
 'If this be so, if all alike shall stand
 On equal ground before the great white throne,—
 If heathen outcasts gain eternal life,
 By law unwritten, or by deeds of love,
 What needs this message of the Cross of Christ?'

Why leave we not the heathen as they are,
 Sure that they too will reach the goal at last?
 Why go our teachers forth from land to land,
 Braving all terrors of the shore, or deep,
 To call those wandering shipwrecked souls to God,
 When, as it seems, they spend their strength in vain,
 And add no jot to all their chance of bliss?
 And yet once more: the souls that stand condemned,
 Or by the Word revealed, or law unwrit,
 Yet graven in their hearts, what fate is theirs?
 Are they for ever doomed to penal fires?
 Does God delight to torture? Can it be
 His love abates when sudden stroke of death
 Cuts off the soul whom that forbearing love
 Was leading to repentance? Here on earth
 The will is plastic: stained with many a crime,
 It yet can struggle upward, and renew
 Its vigour like the eagle's. Dare we say
 That freedom ends with death? Has God's decree
 For ever fixed the casual mood of soul
 Of that last moment? Does His will condemn
 To endless sin? Or welcomes He, at last,
 When sin no longer reigns, the wandering soul
 That wakes thro' death to life? Oh, glorious thought!
 That wraps the future with a golden dawn,
 Where old familiar words and new-born hopes
 Seem melting into one. 'The Son of God,
 Destroys the works of sin, the power of Death';
 'Great was the trespass, greater still the love.'
 'A time shall come when all shall pass away,
 All foes o'ercome, and guilt and darkness gone,
 And God be all in all, the eternal love
 Prevailing, conquering, binding men to God.'
 Ah me! my Father; now I dream my dream
 Of one broad, mighty, everlasting peace,
 The concord of a universe at rest;
 And now once more the mists and shadows come
 Between my soul and God, and fear shuts out
 That full assurèd hope, and sterner words
 Come back unbidden, shattering all my joy.
 Broad were the lines He traced, the Lord of Love—
 The sheep and goats, the lost ones and the saved,
 And evermore, when speaking of the doom
 Of that great day, He spake of endless woe,
 The quenchless fire, the worm that cannot die,
 The punishment which with the life must be
 Co-equal, co-eternal. And yet once more
 (Oh! pardon thou these wandering thoughts of mine)
 New words recur of hope. One only sin,
 So spake He, neither in the world that is,
 Nor in the world that comes, can ever gain
 Forgiveness. Only of the traitor's soul
 Were the words spoken, 'It were good for him
 That he had ne'er been born.' I ask myself,
 Might not that doom, if former fears were true,
 Be written on the universe of God,

On all the countless myriads that have passed
 In darkness to the grave? If thou canst solve
 These riddles, O my Father! if thy soul
 Has gone beyond the doubts that come and go,
 Unfold the secret. One has told, I know,
 Of torments lasting their appointed time,
 Of fires that, burning, cleanse the sin-stained soul,
 Of cycles strange through which our spirits pass,
 Tasting new forms of life, or man or brute,
 Tested and tried till they too rise to God,
 And in the fields Elysian find their rest,
 Or lose their separate being, to the All
 Returning once again.* But these, perchance,
 Are but a poet's fancies. Thou canst guide
 My tottering feet through these bewildering mists
 In which I wander, wavering and perplexed;
 Now flushed with hope, now sinking in despair."

Then Eleazar spake. "Ah me! my son,
 Thy questions come as fast and wild as winds
 Of autumn; and they vex thee, as the blasts
 Vex the deep waters of a mountain lake.
 Here once again I bid thee walk by faith:
 Nor I, nor thou, can see the mystery clear.
 But wonder not, if thoughts should lead thee on,
 Each starting from divinest words of truth,
 To issues which agree not. Evermore
 We see the sides of truth, and cannot grasp,
 So low we stand, the greatness of the whole.
 Thus God elects, yet man is free to choose;
 And God, foreseeing evil, lets it be,
 Yet evil is not his; and Christ our Lord,
 One with the Father in His boundless might,
 Is one with us in all that makes us weak;
 And God hath shown His love in sending Christ,
 Yet Christ by death hath reconciled to God
 The creatures else condemned; and God is One,
 Yet evermore we praise the threefold name,
 The Father, and the Spirit, and the Son.
 So fares it with all mysteries of God;
 Men cannot bring them to the rule and line
 Of earthly wisdom, or with subtle art
 Build up their systems. Broad, o'erarching all,
 They float above us, and with hopes or fears
 We watch their changing aspects. And we need
 Both hopes and fears. We may not cast aside
 One truth that Christ has spoken, may not say
 To all the heedless souls that turn from God,
 'Go on, and sin; the end is still the same,
 The journey only longer.' We dare not close
 The door of hope which Christ Himself throws wide,
 Nor lose from sight the many stripes, and few,
 The lighter, heavier woes. Our feebleness thoughts
 Dwell on the outward symbols of the doom,

* See Plato's *Phædon* (the end), and Virgil's *Æneid*, vi. 735—747.

The worm, the fire, the darkness, and the scourge ;
 But thou, my son, hast learnt the doom itself.
 These are but signs and figures of the true,
 Shadows of things that are. The enduring pain
 Is memory of evil seen at last
 As evil, hateful, loathsome. Pleasant sins,
 Which here the doer of the wrong recalls
 With faint vibrations of the former sense,
 There evermore are present to the soul
 In all their foulness, and we feel the wrath
 Eternal then unveiled. And hence the woe
 Is endless: there we cannot drug our souls,
 Nor blot from sight the ever hateful past,
 The feignèd semblance, or the open shame.
 We cannot change that past ; and through all time
 Its woe is with us, shading all the life
 In gloom of twilight, or in thickest night
 Deepening the blackness. To the souls that sinned
 In ignorance of God, His grace may come
 In mercy wide and free, revealing Light
 To those in darkness, blotting out the guilt
 Of sins of wild confusion, leaving still,
 Through endless æons, all the inward pain
 Which waits on conscious sin. To cancel that
 Were to undo the eternal work of God,
 And leave them still in blindness. And to dream,
 As some have dreamt, of agony of sense,
 The burning flame and thick-ribbed ice in turn,
 As having power to purify and cleanse,
 As greater terrors than the accusing thoughts,
 The voice that speaks in thunder, and the wrath
 Eternal of the All-knowing and All-good,
 This is to take the shadow for the truth,
 And live in outward symbols. Golden throne,
 Bright gates of pearl, and walls of amethyst,
 The pure clear river, and the mystic tree,—
 These are but tokens of the inward bliss,
 The vision of our God, to pure hearts given
 As life, and peace, and joy. And so the woe,
 Which makes the doom of evil, is to see
 That face averted. We who shut Love out,
 Shall be shut out from Love. We see in Him
 That Light eternal, that consuming Fire.
 And still the question meets us as of old,
 ‘ What child of man can face that ceaseless flame,
 And dwell with burnings everlastingly ? ’
 And evermore, as once from Prophet’s lips,
 The strange bold answer reaches unto us,
 ‘ He who the truth hath spoken, right hath done,
 Who, fearing God, has conquered self and sin,
 He needs not fear the fire.’ It burns and burns,
 Consuming what is worthless, cleansing still
 The pure bright gold, the treasure of our God.
 And if these thoughts still leave a darkened space
 Through which no light can pierce, if awful words
 Speak of persistent evil, wills that, fixed

In hate, defiance, scorn, reject the Light,
 Increasing through the endless age their woe,
 As adding still fresh deeds of deeper guilt,—
 Who then am I to question and to judge?
 I bow before the judgment, and am dumb;
 I cannot tell how evil first began,
 Or why through all the mystery of the world
 It runs its course, and all creation groans
 In bondage, panting, struggling to be free.
 I cannot tell if it shall cease to be,
 Or when or how, the final victory won,
 The conquering Christ shall yield His throne to God;
 Or if the conquest shall destroy the works
 Of sin and death, or leave them as they are,
 His curse upon them. All I know is this,
 That God is holy, and that righteous wrath
 Must fall for ever on the soul that sins;
 That God is Love, and willeth not the death,
 Or here, or there, of any soul of man.
 And if I see not how, in secret depths,
 (The light and darkness melting into one)
 The discords of the world are harmonized,
 The truths that clash brought once again to peace,
 I find my stay in old familiar words,
 The key-note of my life, and all its thoughts,
 True of that life through all its wondrous course,
 True of the world through all its circling years,
 True of the endless ages as they pass,—
 Words that rebuke the doubter, bow our pride,
 Refresh the mourner, strengthen all our prayers,
 The words for thee, my son, when vexing thoughts
 Distract thy soul, and fill thy heart with fears;
 Make answer thou, with firm unwavering faith,
 Against those doubts, as Christ made answer once,
 'Impossible with man, but not with God.'
 For thee, at last, the path is clearly traced.
 Do thou thy Master's bidding. If He came,
 Enduring all the torture and the death,
 To speak to all men of His Father's love,
 Thou, too, if thou hast learnt to think His thoughts,
 Must speak to them of Him. Thou may'st not leave
 Those souls to wander in their hopeless night,
 Nor make the mercy of thy God a cloke
 For coward sloth, nor, wrapt in visions wide,
 Forget the present. If thou seest the wrong,
 Rebuke it; if the many sin and die,
 In pity to their souls, hold not thy peace,
 But warn them of the Everlasting Fire,
 And win them with the Everlasting Love.
 And oh! my son, beware lest pride of heart,
 Or yearning pity, or thy zeal for God,
 Lead thee to change His order. Not in vain,
 Taught he at first, by fear of endless woe,
 In parable and drama shadowing forth
 The doom of evil. Men must learn to hate
 The accursed self that keeps their souls from God

Must learn to feel the burden of their guilt,
 As measured by the woe which God assigns
 In that dark prison which the Eternal Love
 Hath ordered in its wisdom and its might.
 And some may find the lesson hard to learn,
 And, knowing not thy thoughts, may miss their way,
 If thou should'st leave the simple, open path
 Which Christ hath trodden. Teach as He hath taught,
 Not halving truths, in haste of jealous strife,
 Nor twisting words awry with subtle art,
 Not speaking where the voice of Christ was dumb,
 Nor silent where He spake. Judge thou thyself,
 And leave the greater task to greater power ;
 Commit thy friends, thy brothers, yea, thy foes,
 The myriads, past, and present, and to come,
 To Him who sitteth on the Eternal Throne,
 The Son of Man, and yet the Lord of All,
 The Judge, the Priest, the Saviour, and the Friend.
 Thou can'st not gauge His drear abyss of wrath,
 Thou can'st not fathom all His boundless love,
 Thou can'st not track his footsteps on the deep ;
 And still if doubt, or grief, or hope, or fear
 Perplex thee for the future or the past,
 Cling to His cross for shelter, own thy guilt,
 Thy shame, thy blindness, and with veiled face,
 Low in the dust, be silent and adore."

THE MYSTERY OF PAIN.

WE are less disposed to criticize this little volume * than to lay before our readers, for their own judgment, a short summary of the thoughts which it suggests, as a solace to the suffering; and this we shall do as much as possible in the author's own method.

The thought which is sought to be conveyed is a simple one. For instance, we all know that there is a very great pleasure in giving; indeed, if we are very fond of anyone, there is no pleasure so great as being able to give him something, or to serve him in some way by our labour. Let us take a small instance to begin with:—Suppose a father has a sick child; has he not much more pleasure in giving an orange to the child than in eating it himself? And would he not rather himself give the child an orange than that one should be supplied to

* The Mystery of Pain: a Book for the Sorrowful. London: Smith, Elder, & Co. 1866.

him by anyone else? He has his best pleasure in going without that the child may have. So, too, does not a husband—if he deserves the name—delight to take some trouble, or go without some little pleasure, that he may give pleasure to his wife, and the wife for the husband, and the child for his parents? And is not this the best of all pleasure when we do not merely enjoy ourselves, but when we cause those we love to enjoy themselves?

But this simple fact contains, like a seed, the whole thought of the book, which is that our sufferings really are a giving to others and serving others, though possibly we may not see how. This case may be imagined. Suppose a person loses out of his pocket a small sum of money: of course he is sorry. He is not willing to lose it; it is a pain to him, perhaps a very great pain, and would seem quite a useless loss. But suppose, again, that by some accident this lost money fell into the hands of a dear friend of the person who lost it, and that it saved his friend from some great misfortune, perhaps kept him from starvation or prevented him from robbing. Then would not the person who lost it—if he came to know of this good result of his loss—be glad instead of sorry? Would he not be willing to have lost it, instead of unwilling? If he was a generous man, he would. And then, as soon as he was glad his friend had had the money, it would be just the same as if he had given it to him. It would be as much his gift to his friend, when he once said, "I am glad you had it, and you are quite welcome to it;" as if he had put his hand into his pocket and given it to him. And he would have just the same pleasure in serving his friend so—although he did not know it at the time, and was very sorry for his loss—as if he had gone to him and said, "Take this." Perhaps he might have even more pleasure: he might be all the more glad because his friend was helped by his loss without having to receive charity from him. Indeed, it might be, that if he had wished to help his friend, he might not have known what he wanted, or his friend might have refused his aid. And so his not knowing about it might be the very means of getting him that great pleasure of helping one he loved. So we see that, if others are served by our losses when we do not know, that does not make our pleasure less when we do know, and does not prevent the service being our gift to them, as soon as ever we are willing that they should have received it through our loss.

This illustration is used in the book; it might possibly be objected, that in using money thus found, honesty would be violated; but this does not affect the argument. Any other service rendered unknowingly to a friend would illustrate it equally well.

In fact, it is so good a thing to serve others that the goodness never can be got out of it. It may be hidden from us, so that we may be grieved for what we should rejoice in if we knew all about it; but it cannot be lost. Only let us come to know and be willing, at any time, and then we have all the joy and all the good of our service just as if we had known and intended it from the first.

Letters are sometimes written in an ink which becomes visible only when warmed by the fire, and a service unconsciously rendered to another through our own loss is like a letter written in such invisible ink, the words of which exist none the less truly because they are not seen. Our knowledge and our love are like the fire which brings them into view.

Some things, then, may seem to be very bad, and yet truly be very good; nay, may be among the best things that can possibly be. For it is wonderful, when we think of it, how much better a thing it is to bear something painful for another than for ourselves.

It is very often the case that losses or pain do a great deal of good to the person who suffers them. They may make him wiser or more careful; they may even warn him from sin and break the influence of bad habits, and in this way be the source of infinite blessing. And because of this good they do us, by God's loving will, we may be and ought to be willing, and even more than willing, to bear them, sharp though they may be. They are mercies in disguise, even though they should seem to render service to no one but ourselves. But when we know that a pain or loss of ours does good to some one else, to some one whom we truly love, then it is a very different thing. Then we are not only willing to bear it as the least of two evils, but we rejoice in it; we are glad of the opportunity of bearing it; we would not part with it. Look at a mother with her child. Does she not rejoice in her trouble? Would she *like* to put it off upon another? unless indeed she be no mother. Which would best reward us for struggling with the waves, to save one's own life from danger, or to rescue a drowning man? Which would the Italian volunteers think best, to undergo their toils to free their countrymen in Venice, or to gain something for themselves?

This, then, is the way in which it is proposed in the book before us to look at all the misery and sorrow in the world; to think of it as being borne, not by each one for himself, but by every one for others; as serving others in some unseen way. So regarded, it is truly a good, even now, while, because its uses are unseen, we feel it as an evil; and it may be destined—is destined—to be the highest and most perfect joy of those who have

suffered it, to be their dearest possession and delight hereafter, when in the future state they are made to see and know the good that it has done, and shall say with all their hearts, "I give it freely for that end; blessed be God, who has given me, however blindly, however unwillingly, the privilege of serving." Speaking from this thought, the author says—

"There are the materials, then, evidently within us, for an entire change of our thoughts respecting pain. The world in this respect, we might almost feel, seems to tremble in the balance. A touch might transform it wholly. One flash of light from the Unseen, one word spoken by God, might suffice to make the dark places bright, and wrap the sorrow-stricken heart of man in the wonder of an unutterable glory."

"If all pain might be seen in the light of martyrdom; if the least and lowest in man's poor and puny life—or shall we rather say, in God's great universe—might be interpreted by its best and highest, were not the work done? It is done, for the light has shone, the word is spoken."

That is, God has revealed to us in Christ both that His own life is a life of sacrifice and service, and that ours truly is so too; and also He has shown us what service it is that our losses and sorrows render to the world. He has shown us man's need of a new and better life, of a higher nature. He has shown us that He is the Redeemer of Mankind, and that He is carrying out that redemption, and raising men up into a higher and holier state, making man like Himself. This, God has shown us, is the work He is doing in the world; and this work of making mankind perfect is helped on by all that we are called upon to bear. God is the great Giver, and he is giving life to men; for this is not man's proper life which leaves him as he now is, prone to sin and selfishness. God is giving the best of all gifts to men—a new and holy nature; and when He lets us suffer or lose, be it much or little, He joins us with Himself in his giving, makes us the servants of Humanity, bearing for it even as He bears.

But in carrying out the thought that we are permitted by God to help His work by our sorrows, the author does not imply that the sins of others are laid upon our head, or that our sufferings have any merit. Christ has made the one sacrifice, and worked the full salvation. But then this work of raising man to holiness, which Christ has rendered possible once for all, is now being carried out—is being carried out in all things, and in our pains and our losses among the rest. Not that these have any special virtue, or bear any special part; they are only God's special gift to us of serving. He does not need our services indeed, except as love *needs* the best blessedness of all it loves, and cannot do without it. But, being Love, He cannot be content unless He gives us the best thing He has to give, and that

is to join us with Himself in giving. As a father makes room for his child's gifts among his own, and will not so supply all domestic wants, and so complete all charities, that the child shall have no opportunity to add his mite, so God makes room for our giving, gives us opportunities to bestow our mites of service, takes us up, and links us with Himself as the givers of life to man.

These are our losses and our pains ; this is our wretchedness ; this glory clothes the darkness of our grief. And surely we may at least say this—If God would give us the best and greatest gift, that which, above all others, we might long for and aspire after, it is this that He must give us, the privilege He gave His Son, to be used and sacrificed for the best and greatest end. Nothing else could so fill our nature or satisfy our hearts as this, that Christ's own life should be renewed, His work fulfilled in us ; that we should be united with Him so, and feel St. Paul's words true of our own poor and blank-seeming sorrows, "I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ," our sufferings being related to an end which is not merely ours ; an end that is, of all ends, the greatest and the best.

But it must be remembered that the result which thus glorifies and makes good the painful part of human life is one that we cannot see. We can, indeed, now and then trace how the sufferings of some do work good for others. How often does the sudden death of a neighbour turn men from evil courses, or the grief of parents touch the hardened feelings of a son. So, too, the world is benefited by the strength its teachers gain through sorrow, and the blood of martyrs secures their children's liberty. And even in material things society is advanced by the sacrifice of its members, and the losses of one generation give birth to the successes of the next. The loss of life in mines and manufactories leads men to the means of safety ; shipwrecks improve navigation ; the bones of discoverers whiten the plains that future generations see white with harvests. But it is not of such visible results that the book speaks. The good that is being worked out in man is one that is not within our view, but is often wrought in events that seem most opposed to good. It is the regeneration of our nature ; a change so deep that it involves the loss of much that seems very good to us, much that would satisfy us ; for it is the raising mankind up to a goodness that satisfies not us, but God, who sees not as man sees. So it is by faith it must be known and felt. But as it is pointed out, this is not a strange demand, or one that should make the thought seem less likely to be true. In almost all cases whatever, we see and know so little that it is only by thinking of that which we

cannot see, and should not naturally think, that we can form true opinions. On this point the book contains an argument which we need not follow into detail, because in fact the simplest reflection is enough to prove the point. We see so very little of the effects and connections of things, that we may be sure their true meaning will depend very much on what we do not see; therefore, when it is said that all human experience is the bringing about of the restoration of man's nature, it is no difficulty in the way, or evidence to the contrary, that it is not visibly so. It demands faith; but faith is the only true reason, for it alone takes into account that which is not seen.

There is one other thought which it is necessary to bear in mind, and that is that to make sacrifice for others always joyful to us, our own life must be made more perfect. It would not be enough to make us good, or to make us full of love; we must have a more perfect nature too, and that is heaven. The joy of heaven is a joy in giving up, and there we shall have a nature fitted for it. Here we may be willing, but we groan beneath the pangs, as even Christ groaned, sharing our infirmity to redeem us from it. He *emptied* himself that so He might feel sacrifice as pain. But in God we see perfect sacrifice in perfect joy. He gives always and infinitely, does that which is loss and sorrow to us, lives in sacrifice, and is wholly blest. Why then is sacrifice pain to us?

This is the answer:—Sacrifice, or giving, which is in its true nature joy (as exercise is pleasure to a healthy man) becomes painful to a being who is, as it were, under disease, who is marred and weakened, and has not his full powers of life; just as exercise becomes pain to a body that is diseased. A person suffering from rheumatism feels it painful to move his arm; but moving the arm is not properly a painful thing, only disease makes it so: and so we, being as it were diseased in our soul-life, feel it painful to be sacrificed, though that is our proper joy. But there is this difference, a person with rheumatism does not lie and think, "moving the arms is a *bad thing*, it hurts me so;" he thinks, "I want curing; it hurts me so to move my arms." But we, feeling pain in being sacrificed (which is our *giving*), do not say, "I want *curing*, for I feel sacrifice painful;" but, mistaking sadly, say, "It is a *bad thing* to be sacrificed, it hurts me so." Bodily health loves exertion, and can only so endure to live; the life of man loves giving, and in giving only can endure to be. That is heaven; but to aspire after heaven is our privilege, our duty, here, as sickness aspires after health.

God wants our children sometimes, and we cannot part with them; it rends our hearts: but it is not a bad thing to give a

child to God; it is a bad thing for human life to be in such a state that we cannot give it but with intolerable pangs.

But we may well ask, how can this be proved? Well, there are many proofs; some lie deep down in science, which proves all things to be necessarily joined together, and to constitute some undiscovered whole; some are in reasonings which go to prove that the world must be made thus, and that loss or suffering which is not giving cannot be; but there is another proof, open to us all, and that lies in the heart,

Milton says—

“They also *serve* who only stand and wait.”

“And if they who stand and wait, do not those who suffer too? Is it conceivable that God should give to some, whom He blesses with health and vigour, and large gifts of influence, the privilege of greatly serving Him, of doing a wide work of use for others; and that this privilege, which none else can equal or supply, He withholds from those from whom He takes health and strength, and every gift but that of suffering? Does He give the one the blessedness of serving, and refuse it to the other? ‘Are not my ways *equal*, saith the Lord.’

“If our life were ordained to be good, truly, satisfyingly good, it could be made so only in one way. It must be a life of sacrifice, for all other goods fall short—we know they fall infinitely short—of this; and it must be sacrifice for unseen ends, because the best ends must be unseen by us. To be the best, our life must be sacrifice, and for ends unseen. It must be, therefore, to us, just what our life is. Must we not believe, then, that our life is this—the best?

“In its fruitless-seeming pains and failures, it fulfils the conditions of being the best life, of presenting the highest form of good, and of being turned to the best ends. It is this God calls upon us to believe; this is a demand He makes for faith, showing us, to justify and confirm it, a life like our own, of sorrow and humiliation; or, if in this unlike our own, unlike only because the sorrow was greater, and the humiliation more profound; a life of sorrow in which the meaning and the end are no more concealed, but made manifest to all. Revealing so the secret of our life, He calls on us for faith.

“Appealing to the heart—to that moral feeling on which the existence of God himself rests firm in man’s belief, have we not answer, distinct and clear, that pain must be sacrifice; a privilege, and not a loss? Does not the thought, once seen to be possible, affirm itself as necessary, and refuse to be held in doubt? Does it not link itself with the belief in God, so that we are compelled to say, that if God is, then pain is sacrifice—sacrifice for man? For if we think otherwise, then do we not choose to join evil with His name? Not to believe our pains serve other’s good is but to contradict the very evidence on which we assert His being. Once recognized in its true meaning, the thought ceases to be a question of argument and balanced evidence; it sinks into the soul, and becomes part of that deep conviction on which all religion rests. Pain cannot be interpreted otherwise than thus, when once we see that it can thus be interpreted. The heart rises up from its chains and rejoices. God has revealed Himself; He has manifested joy, and we see it and are glad. Amid our tears we smile, for, when our woes are deepest, then our joys are highest. Then we are likest Him, are nearest to the dignity of manhood; partakers most in

that on which all living joy is based, needing only that our life be perfected to make it joy."

Or if, when we speak and think of human sorrow in general terms, we yet can doubt, can we doubt when we call to mind the real things that we have seen and heard?—the cruel sorrows, the blighted hopes, the life-long tortures that have befallen the innocent and weak, and borne, or seemed to bear, no fruit? widows who have seen their sons consigned to the grave, no potent voice recalling them, or buried in the worse grave of the madhouse; the strong man prostrated, and compelled to leave all that he loved to poverty; the long agony of hearts that prey upon themselves; the cheerless martyrdom of slow disease untended by loving hands; the wasted homes and dishonoured hearths that mark the track of war; the raving horrors of fire or shipwreck; the slow hours passed in the sick longing for help, and no help has come, but only death—death, whose grim visage has grown beautiful so often beside the more abhorred face of life. Have all these things been for NOTHING?

And that one great Sorrow, the shadow of whose blackness has made earth more bright for ever, shall it for ever fail to teach us how dark the glory of man's life may seem?

But we must end. There is a deeper and darker problem in the world than pain; and of that this little volume does not speak, nor here do we. Pain and Sin are not one mystery, but two; and, though in some respects closely linked, are not always allied. As man rises he often suffers more, not less; and sorrow almost as often seems a privilege bestowed on goodness as a chastening on vice. Sin retains all its blackness, though we know that pain is joy misfelt.

Still we may ask,—Would it really console us in our griefs, and thus aid us in our struggles, to be sure of this? Could we be glad in losses and distress even though we were sure that in them we were sacrificed for man? No; if in our pleasant days our thoughts never or but seldom turned joyfully to God's work in man, and dwelt on it in gladness. If ever, save when sorrow struck us, we dwelt wrapt up in our own interests, or the narrow sphere of our own private affections, then the thought of man's redemption would give us little comfort in our griefs. It would seem a far off, doubtful compensation, if we then only sought to think of it, and to be glad because of it. Not so will the joy of the Lord consent to become our strength; that were to seek selfishly an unselfish bliss, which cannot be. But this may surely be, that all of us should take up again our long-lost privilege of being glad for man, and rejoicing for his sake all the day; long lost, but never forfeited, because it rests upon the infinite

bounty of that great Heart, with whom to Be is to bestow. If we could live as seeing the invisible, ceasing to cramp our thought and crush our hearts within the too narrow sphere of things perceived—marring the fair proportions of our life, which should be moulded to the truth of things, and not their seeming—if we could live thus, ever happy in the thought that in all things God is raising man, finding in it a keener joy in all delight, a deeper sacredness in every duty, then our sorrows might be lightened by it too. No longer strange and unfamiliar, it would come to us then as a long-trusted friend, and say, murmuring sweet comfort in our ear, "See, God, who is in all things giving His life to man, accepts this gift from you."

DIARIES.

AMONG the most beautiful and improving offices of piety that of keeping a religious diary may be made one of the richest. It is not worship, or devotion, or praise, in the strictest sense of the word, yet it is eminently a religious exercise. It is that habit of self-communion, self-reckoning and contemplation, by which, from time to time, a review is made of religious experience, tracing its incidents and progress, and comparing it at different stages, and marking the heights and depths of spiritual variations. We have called it a religious exercise, because it is prompted by religious emotions, and engages all that is sincere within us; while there is, or ought to be, connected with it, a feeling that we are searching ourselves after the manner in which God searches us. To discharge the duty well a good memory is indispensable, and God has provided that the memory shall be always strong and faithful with regard to religious experience, and all that enters into it.

The custom of keeping religious diaries prevailed very widely among those of cultivated minds in times gone by but it has almost ceased to exist now. There are those who still follow the practice, in part because the example of the dead has prompted them to it, and in part from a natural impulse. Some of the books that appeal most to the sensibilities of our nature, that quicken the heart to deeper love, and truer faith and trust, are those which are classed in our precious literature under the head of Diaries—private journals of various kinds the character of which is distinctively personal and religious. As records of

events and facts of the past, of the manner and accidents of ancient days, these books are of great value to the historian. They relate much of which there is no public history, fix dates, and reveal to us actual impressions made by circumstances as they transpired, and thus they revive the past with which they are bound up, clothing it with a present reality and interest. When private partialities and personal biases, which more or less distort the truth, are judiciously allowed for, such diaries are most authentic and reliable records of vanished years.

The series begins in our Christian era with the Confessions of St. Augustine, and comes down through all the ages of the Church, giving us records of spiritual experience and revelations of the heart-struggles of men representing every form and phase of faith and piety. When judged of in the mass, these diaries constitute an amazingly forcible expression of the reality and power of the religious element in human nature. They bring us into contact with invisible souls and an invisible world; so vividly, so faithfully, so startlingly do they reveal the workings of an influence which the strongest have not been able to resist, and which has nerved the weakest with energies surpassing those that seemed to move the world.

The sentiment, the purpose, the method, which guided and prompted this daily record of religious experience may be briefly glanced at. Though the habit of keeping a diary, instead of being confined to Christians of any one sect, has obtained among the disciples of every creed, yet there was one common sentiment that prompted them all to give expression to their state of thought and feeling in diaries. That sentiment was a conscientious impression that they were in some sense required to study and to record the constant emotions of their hearts, that they might have by referring at any time to their past experience, a complete account of their spiritual condition and religious attainments. They believed that they must either advance or decline every day, and that from year to year there would be marked evidence, one way or another, furnished in a course of faithfully-written statements of their feelings and actions. If on each day of their mature life, they should enter upon a fair page, how they had felt and acted, in reference to the purpose and plan which they felt certain God had in view for them, the comparison of the record would show whether they were gaining or losing on the balance in the great register above. This is presenting the purpose of a writer of a diary from the best possible and fairest stand-point. It supposes the diary to be strictly between himself and God; to have no side object; to be open to no other eye—to have no posthumous value. It was not to be written for any end of self-justification to posterity, nor to be

made a medium for revealing the motives under which the writer had lived and acted in troubled times, or amid the collisions of common life. Still less was such a diary, keeping the religious and personal character of it in view, to serve as a secret witness in behalf of the writer about disputed matters, on which other pens might have written differently had the hands that held them not been stilled by death. The record was not to be the channel of malignant feelings, or even truthful insinuations or disclosures against other persons. Diaries of this description have been made public, to the shame of the publishers, and the disgrace of the dead. But any side purpose will vitiate the devotional and pious end of a religious diary,—the end, viz., of recording the inner soul-history, in its covenant with, and its experience under, God.

A very special characteristic type of piety, exhibited by our ancestors about two hundred years ago, was a habit of diligent and anxious self-study and self-reckoning every day, and by a review of every week, month, and year. They practised a religious introspection, a looking into their hearts; they applied a sort of scale, a spiritual thermometer, to their feelings, their consciences, their compunctions, their aspirations, their heats and chills of piety. Just as American farmers, who dwell in the valleys of the great rivers, can tell by marks they have made on rocks and trees, the lowest point to which the streams have fallen in droughts, and the highest point to which they have risen in freshets, so multitudes of religious persons of a past age could tell by their written diaries on what day of all their lives they had felt most devout or most cold; most spiritual or most worldly in mind; most hopeful or most desponding; when they had loved God and when they had despised Him; and also when God was most gracious to them, and when He was most darkly withdrawn. It marks by contrast the scientific or practical utilitarian character of our age, that there are so many who keep diaries and records of a very different sort, such as chronicle external rather than internal experience; the degrees of heat and cold, at morning, noon, and night, for every day in the year; the height of tides; the quantity of rain; the scale of the markets; the alterations on "Change;" dinner engagements, &c., &c. Rarely, if ever, do the &c., &c., embrace recollections of divine goodness or expressions of gratitude for divine mercies. The spirit of ancient piety found a more serious and vital interest in chronicling the changes of the inner life. The birth-day; the new year; deliverance from, or subjection to calamity or trouble; recovery from sickness; the commencement of a new enterprise, or any event of private interest, was made the occasion of some religious vow, which, with the feelings and

emotions accompanying it, was put on record; it was dated in time; it was measured by a standard; it was applied as a test; and the Spirit was periodically called before it, as if it were seated in judgment, to give in its testimony, to confess to short-comings, or to triumph because of its fidelity, if it were found faithful.

There have been many most beautiful and faithful specimens of this habit of keeping a spiritual diary. From a perusal of them, it is impossible to be uninfluenced by the improving lessons of the origin, growth and progress of religion in the soul, which they teach. In some of them there is intense morbidness and sickly sentiment, fancies innumerable, frights and compunctions spent on vain subjects, whereby the energies of the heart and the healthy action of the mind were enfeebled. In a few of these diaries, there are too evident marks of hypocrisy or of a self-blinded spirit, boastings over good actions, secret self-complacency, balancings of virtues against vices, self-justifications put down to smother self-compunctions, which are not entered upon the record, but which are borne witness to by the evident attempt to get rid of them. In the best diaries, however, we see faithful and precious histories of life-long inward struggles, lofty purposes, faltering hopes,—in a word, we see the steady progress of heaven-guided souls! Precious memorials! rich in their wisdom, instructive in their details; encouraging to the worst of us, and humbling to the best. These faithful records exhibit to us the whole course of God's dealing, and of the Holy Spirit's work, with those who have sought after likeness to Christ Jesus—with those who had learned to suffer and be strong, baffled often, but spiritually brave—who studied and proved themselves, and measured their hearts by the searching tests and high demands of Gospel truth. We see, in their light, that to each human soul pertains a religious history—a spiritual biography—all its own; and that when it is revealed faithfully and written truthfully, it will help other souls in their course of discipline. How clearly do the beginnings of piety speak through the pages of some diaries! how the tender trusts of the soul expand and strengthen, and the silent movements of the heart—by the Scripture called *faith*—become larger and stronger! what visions and wondrous thought come and go—how the young timid conscience flutters and fears, and how through storms and walls of water, through mountain gorges and sore distress, as well as through sunshine and joy, the soul seeks and finds the “central calm of all agitation!” There too are to be seen the despondency that weakens by its distrust, and the despair that destroys by its unbelief. Perhaps the most valuable lesson to be learnt from a perusal of these diaries is gathered from the circumstance

that self-satisfaction and inward assurance are strongest in presumptuous spirits, and the most subdued in humble ones ; as the scrupulous and the delicate in spiritual structure will mourn over shortcomings which never ruffle the peace of the robust in self-conceit.

Two reasons may be mentioned for the disuse of the habit of keeping religious diaries. First, they were, for the most part, written only for the perusal of those who, in them, revealed their inmost hearts with all their humiliating confessions and self-reproaches. The writers wished to have the means of referring back from time to time to stages and incidents in their religious experience, to read in the calmness of after years what they had recorded in the fervency of an early zeal, and to trace the course of their impressions, the losses and gains of their spiritual conflicts. The diary was a sacred repository, to be hid from every other eye save that which saw it take its record, and to be committed to the flames when it had served its temporary use. Unfortunately, many of them have been rescued from obscurity, and appear in print. They have met with an unfavourable reception from many readers. The writers have been harshly blamed, perhaps unjustly censured ; their self-accusations and confessions ridiculed, or interpreted as indications of spiritual pride, hypocrisy, and weakness ; while their fervours, or the unstable variations of feeling, have been regarded as proofs that piety had not a healthy, strengthening, moderating influence over the writers. The dread of having the records of their religious experience thus rudely exposed and treated, has induced many persons to abstain from keeping diaries. This is one reason. Another is, that it is considered unwise, and almost always dangerous to the sincerity and injurious to the humility of those who make daily or occasional jottings of their moods and feelings. The very intention of sitting down in order to describe one's state of mind will naturally lead to assuming or putting on an artificial condition of feeling and thought, just as a person when sitting for a portrait, in the effort to look easy and natural, is almost certain to look anything but natural. So it is feared that the moment one proposes to record his thoughts, feelings, emotions, hopes, fears and faith, he is likely to be misled by a thousand little biases, and to set himself down more or less favourably or unfavourably. Perhaps, also, it is unsafe to give a permanent impression to ever-changing moods of thought, and unsatisfactory and useless to mark the incessant fluctuations of the spirit, or the rising and falling of passion, of self-satisfaction and misgivings. The danger on the one hand is of hypocrisy, and on the other of morbid and despondent feeling. Few, it is said, will deal in all honesty with themselves in these heart-

searching processes, the results of which are committed to a written record. Certainly not many have calmness and balance of soul enough, or comprehensiveness and discretion of judgment enough, to allow for all the films which may gather on the mental vision, or harmonize all the discordant tones which come from a poor, distracted human heart. There is great weight in this latter objection to recording one's religious experience; it is liable to all the risks of insincerity, unfairness, and damaging to practical usefulness. Evidence might be easily cited from numerous diaries to prove how the writers favoured or wronged themselves; how they exaggerated or smoothed over their faults; how they called up sickly fancies from their hearts, or deepened a natural despondency, or nourished spiritual pride, or read falsely the language of their own souls. Still there are many diaries; and we think a large majority, which give proof throughout, of a most faithful self-scrutiny, plain, honest, self-dealing, pursued in a right spirit, and to the very best effects, in gradually moulding the character aright, and resulting in a most healthful tone of practical religion.

We cannot allow this part of the subject to pass without giving one or two examples of the homeliness or truthfulness of diaries. The first extracts are from an old diary of 200 years ago. John Rutty, a Quaker, was the writer. "1 Day of month. The day concluded badly, in inordinate passion on a sudden attack." "8 Day of month. Snappish." How brief and honest are these confessions!

In the diary of one of the greatest and best of England's philosophers of the last generation, Sir James Macintosh, we find the following record made, after reading "The Sermon on the Mount:—

"For a moment, O Teacher Blessed! I taste the unspeakable delight of feeling myself to be better. I feel as in the days of my youth, that hunger and thirst after righteousness, which long habits of infirmity, and the low concerns of the world, have contributed to extinguish." The man must have been wiser and have felt better after writing that; nor does it harm his memory, that what he penned in some holy midnight hour alone, searching his heart, should be published from his private papers to the world. It was a sacred throbbing of the heart, felt in Pagan India, as a reminiscence of a pious education in Scotland. And what an echo that silent throb of one heart awakens in other hearts! Take another record from the same pen,—as candid a self-revealing as the human heart can make:—"I am sure I should not esteem my own character in another person." This sentence is a whole volume of self-knowledge, and is the briefest and best response to the ancient advice, "Know thy-

self." How full of charity it is too. For if we only learn by faithful self-scrutiny to know ourselves, we shall always discover traits which we should not like, and do not like in others; and if, nevertheless, we can live in peace with ourselves, and think tolerably well of ourselves, should we not try to live more peaceably with others, and to think more charitably of them?

Whatever opinion may be entertained about the wisdom or the utility of making a permanent record (for our own eyes, or to aid and cheer another) of our private religious experience, our heart-searchings, our communions with our spirits, the subject which we have been considering must at least remind the reader of the fact that each individual has the materials furnished daily for such a record. There is a diary written in each heart, whether we leave it in its original hieroglyphics there, or copy it on the paper page. Each soul has a religious history. There may be difficulties in the way of our writing it out fairly, or of using it to edification should it be written: just as when an invalid attempts to count his pulse, the very effort to do it alters the beat of that sensitive register of the vital forces. But the heart has its diary. *There* are recorded faithfully, deeply, permanently, the histories of our spiritual experience,—the suggestions, appeals, opportunities, visions, resolutions, compunctions, triumphs, and discomfitures, which, with more than the variety and the inconstancy of the weather in one year, or in a score of years, have been entertained within the secret recesses of our being. There can be no question of this fact. Philosophy even accepts and asserts it, as it compels our belief through force of the natural constitution of man. It may startle us to realize this fact; for it is saying a great deal more than if we affirmed that the sand on the sea-shore preserves a trace of every impression from every beating wave, or that the well-worn highway of a city keeps a memorial of every foot has trodden it. To say that a human heart preserves a record of every influence that makes up its religious history, is to assert a fact which we can credit only when we know how fearfully and wonderfully we are made. The evidence of the fact appears in many marvellous tokens, revealed in dreams, in memories, in the return in age of feelings left far back in youth, in the utterances of delirium, in the failing and yet renewing consciousness of the last hours of life. Then the heart signifies that it has made a record of all that has religiously concerned it, and that it has committed to the Spirit the keeping and the renewing and the reperusal of that record. Now come into dread significance the words about the "*books to be opened in the judgment*," from which every man is to be judged. What may these books be but the opening of man's heart-diary? The book of life—man's heart purified by

the truth—the book of death, the record of the heart unregenerated and full of dead works. Dreadful and hopeful books, and in our own keeping! A diary is made to be used; we call it to remembrance in the night, in the night of each day, or in the night of life. It is our history. No eye but our own may ever read it. We may lock it up in inviolable privacy; but it is all there within us, and we cannot alter a line in it. It began when our lives began, and before we began to think; for the spirit has the start of the mind. What the eye first saw, and the thought first wondered over, and the heart first loved, was entered on its earlier pages as the elements from which more distinct and intelligible impressions were next to be derived. Every thought and feeling which have taken their substance, as it were from religion—every serious emotion, every anxious questioning, every remonstrance of conscience, every echo to the knock at the heart's door,—has been entered on the soul's diary, and left its record there. It has all been recorded to be preserved, and preserved to be read again and again. And this is the irrepressible and irresistible conclusion: that the whole religious or irreligious experience of every human being is on record, registered in the deep places of the soul. Retrospects and self-reckoning call it to remembrance. Surely there is something solemn and deeply penetrating in the thought that each reader bears with him this register, which while it contains the history of his soul, may be also the doom book of retribution for him! Faithful beyond all other registers is that of the heart. Faithful and secret too. But “nothing is covered which shall not be revealed and nothing hid which shall not be brought to light.”

G. B. P.

THE PRESENT COMPREHENDED IN THE ETERNAL

THE popular notion that death first brings us into connection with eternity has no ground in Reality; it is not with things *present* that things eternal stand in contrast, but with things visible. *Seen* things are temporal; *unseen* things are eternal. All men are as much in the midst of Eternal Realities now as they ever will be. Indeed, all visibilities are but the results of permanent Invisibilities. Mankind is itself a portion of the abiding Spiritual Entities which Eternity comprehends in the Imperishable Existences.

God-awakened men find their true home in the spiritual universe—the Kingdom of the Invisible, which transcends the senses of men, and all the objects of which those senses take cognizance. The unseen spirit of Man as completely grasps its proper objects as the hand that upon which it lays hold, or the eyes a scene or a landscape; as completely as the physical powers are adapted to the earth upon which man dwells, the spirit is adapted to the spiritual substances which compose the invisible kingdom of God—the Righteousness, Peace, and Joy, which are some of the constituent elements of His own Being.

God's revelation to men, outworking itself in the Holy Scriptures, which are a consequence of that revelation, is our warranty for asserting the existence of the spiritual and universal kingdom which comprehends the spirits of men, and which they are formed to comprehend. Scripture teachings and Christ's work harmonize in directing human spirits to converse continually with their proper objects. For Christ and Scripture unveil God—open to men His nature. All that is *Right* in human life has its source in the living righteous God. Wherever man has exhibited truth in conduct, courage in conflict, peace in trouble, or joy in sorrow, he has, after the manner of Christ, set forth the Divine Author of all things visible and invisible. Christ's life interprets every other life—the good, by showing the fountain of goodness; the evil, by making manifest what the evil is a departure from. Goodness is no mere quality in the minds of men, but the very essence of God; evil is the perversion of powers derived from Him. The Man of Sorrows poured into the hearts of Prophets, and after them into the hearts of Apostles, all the joy, which they ever experienced in the progress of truth and righteousness, whether seen in the life of individuals or in the advancement of nations. The Eternal sustained the Spiritual Temporal.

The trumpet-tongued tent-maker of Tarsus, himself possessed by the Spirit of Christ, gives us guidance in our attempts to form an estimate of the value of all things as they are seen revolving in the light of the Eternal. His declaration is, "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." This is the law of spiritual life. Being so, let us consider—

I. *How to contemplate the vicissitudes of Life and Death.*—We find ourselves in the midst of boundless Beauty, of vast variety, and, withal, of continual change; but we never find annihilation of anything. The new ever succeeds the old; the death of the old is accessory to the birth of the new; and there is beauty in the arrangement. The brightness and glory of Creation are

perennially sustained, maugre all the changes which we witness. Affection and Sympathy and Gentleness are always shedding their lustre upon Society, though individuals die and generations pass away. An exhaustless fountain supplies humanity with its graces as it supplies creation with its beauties and glories. Even amid the changeabilities of friendship and affection we have the fact that *love has been there*, and we cannot think of it as becoming extinct.

The Divine Ideal is continually realized in the Actual, and we may therefore pierce through the sensible, and gain sight of the eternal. We have pledges of eternity in all things, up from the lowliest object to the Resurrection of the World's Redeemer and the Living Spirit which streams from Him through all things. His own death enables us to look at decay and death everywhere with feelings of resignation and of hope. We may approach the shrines of what we considered to be most dear and precious to us, remembering that the seen was only temporal, that the unseen there was eternal, and therefore cannot perish. The Eternal Beauty has taken charge of that which we appear to have lost. All the seemingly extinct humanity is gathered up into the Divine Humanity which was manifested in Christ. Let us consider—

II. *How to contemplate Eternity Itself.*—Thinking of God's own Life as the only eternity, we are saved from the utterly oppressive effort to identify eternity with the interminable past and the interminable future. When we no longer think of the present as only belonging to time, we cannot think of eternity as belonging only to the endless future or the unbeginning past. Eternity underlies all the course of geologic ages. Unchanging Love presided over all the changes which those ages record.

Dates cannot aid us in contemplating the Eternity which comprehends time and all things else. No man is able to maintain a sense of endlessness of torture, and therefore he cannot add fuel to his own fear by any such attempt. Hell becomes a phantom to one who endeavours to picture to his mind the popular conception of hell; not to him who regards it as the loss of Eternal Life. It is the sense of eternity which can alone give the conviction of reality to all things, both seen and unseen, because they are seen in Him who was before all worlds—the Eternal Word, who is the Unfolder of ages out of ages. For He is the Eternal Ground of all things and of all persons. He is the source and consistency of creation, and gathers up all things in heaven and earth into Himself. It is because He is the Maker and Redeemer of all things that He can declare, . . . "*I will lose nothing.*"

Christ then is the Interpreter of Eternity, as He is of all things seen and unseen. We can endure to contemplate it in Him; for it is not cast into the mould of time, or looked at by

the aid of an endless series of years. It is a possession for every moment—a treasure to be possessed now; and we may hold it wherever we go, or into whatever new circumstances we may be brought. Birth and death cannot interfere with the Life which is from God, and in God. We inherit His *Gift* apart from any accident or occurrences whatever.

III. *Man's proper occupation and highest privilege is to look into the Unseen and Eternal Things.*—History and Prophecy are rightly employed by us when they aid us in contemplating present permanent realities. The living present ought to occupy all our powers. He who is always engaged with the future has been pronounced to be a restless, useless, bad man, because he misses the meaning, and misapplies the powers of life which have been so graciously bestowed upon him. Acting upon the perception and the truth of things that are, we may leave the development of all things to Him who inhabits eternity, and the lowly spirit; He makes known His mind in all His procedures, and invites the co-operation of all His children in accomplishing the destined perfection of all His works. When we work with Him we see with Him, because the performance of His will brings us into acquaintance with His Mind, and makes us partakers of His Wisdom.

It is thus that the Vision of the Eternal stimulates a man to task and toil. Living and moving, and possessing his being in the midst of perceived eternal verities, he is free and bold to act; for he habitually and steadily converses with the permanent spiritual entities which encompass him. Knowing the important consequences of conduct, he acts from deliberate purpose, and not from sudden impulse; so subordinating the visible and changeable to the unseen and eternal.

The vigorous thinker and doer perceives that *the things that are* press upon us, and that, because our true treasures are internal and spiritual. He knows that he is more than the outward objects upon which he operates. The vast circumference of creation is in existence only because of its Centre, Who is God. We possess them alone in Him, as we possess ourselves. There is no self-possession apart from the inheritance of the Divine Spirit, which is freely bestowed upon men through the Head and Elder Brother of the Race. We enter the heavenly kingdom, and see the eternity when we possess the Divine Spirit.

IV. *God's Message to men wins their will to look into the Invisible Things.*—Although the mind, which is subject to the sway of the flesh, is in bondage to the visible, the emancipating Spirit of Truth makes the heart which receives Him free of the spiritual universe. The visible enslaves: the invisible frees. It is fear that makes men cling to the seen and fly from the un-

seen. "Conscience indeed makes cowards of us all." We dislike to enter the chamber of the soul's imagery, because we expect to find grisly shapes; because we are haunted with dark recollections and dreaded anticipations. Our work and our pleasures are all that we desire, so long as the horror of the unseen remains with us, and the dread of meeting God.

We dread ourselves. We would like to find some charm for laying the spectres of the imagination; for an eternal Self can make a hell of heaven. We seek rather to find an earthly region of soothing melodies and lovely visions, though they may soon pass away, and leave us with ourselves as before, than to meet ourselves fairly before the searching eyes of God, in the world where spirits innumerable converse with us. And yet we are constitutionally as fitted to look into the unseen and abiding as we are to look at the seen and the transitory. St. Paul looked at both, and would have us look at both as men redeemed.

It is God's Gospel of Forgiveness that can in His Hands deliver us from the dread of eternity, looked at either in the past, present, or the future. Reconciled to our Eternal Father, we then have no wish to try to shake eternity from us. We rather rejoice that we are the offspring of an Eternal Being, and that therefore we are made to share in His Eternity. He in whom we have the Immortality cries evermore to us all, "Come unto Me!" Reliance upon Him brings deliverance from the dark demon of self, and puts in possession of victory over evil by the new birth to goodness.

The wise preacher bids us abandon sensuousness for solid blessedness, because the glorious things of God belong to us as the heirs, with Christ, of all Divine Treasures. The Lamb of God manifested the Life which He bestows upon men. He aids us to claim the privileges of our Humanity; He educates to the exercise of trust and hope. Although we are naturally disinclined to such exercises, yet these are manly efforts, and connected with all that is most manly, and blessed, and excellent in spiritual Life.

Let us then walk among temporal things with the certainty that Eternal Treasures are about us, and with the resolute determination not to lose them. We shall see them with ever increasing clearness as we live in the sense of their possession; for Love, Goodness, and Truth, lie at the Foundation of all things, and will appear to us, notwithstanding the thick veil of selfishness in ourselves and others, has been hiding them from us. Eternal Things are ours, as light and air are ours. We may be radiant now in the light of eternity, and yet may look at the visible, for it is clothed with the Living Beauty of the Encircling Eternity. Order everywhere proclaims the changeless truth

and enduring Majesty of God, Who calls us to enter His Eternal Home.

Dwelling in God, who is the Home of the hearts of His children, we shall obtain abiding possession of all that endures for ever. Yea, the temporal things themselves are only really possessed by the men of spiritual mind and character. The death which carnality induces prevents the proper appreciation of things which pass away. He who sees most clearly the invisible things of God sees also most clearly the things that appear to the bodily sight; for it is the spirit that really sees through the eyes of the body. The Assemblage of Divine Powers, which constitutes the Universe, is seen only by the awakened spirit of the man who feels after and finds God; in Whose image the Heart, and Reason, and Conscience, and Will, of human beings are made.

The earth, inhabited only by spiritual men who communed with God in themselves, in each other, and in all things, would be the realization of new heavens and a new earth; for the heavenly would then be seen as the archetype of the earthly, and not the earthly of the heavenly, as too often seen now. Blessed is it that we gain man from God, not God from man; earth from heaven, not heaven from earth; the visible from the invisible, not the invisible from the visible; the Human from the Divine, not the Divine from the Human.

W. R. P.

GOD'S ORATOR.*

. . . A PREACHER and a twaddler are, you suppose, in the language of common life, the same thing? Homiletical principles and proofs are nicknames? You throw sermons into the waste-paper basket? You read them only to yawn over them? They are a narcotic; and, when you awake, a subject for laughter? Turn back, then, ye noble souls, who are enchanted by witty nonsense, and intoxicated by childish prejudices; who live in excitement, and to whom repose is intolerable; turn back to your thoughtless slumber; dream of jocose, fashionable preachers, and wake up to read the last novel. I do not write for you.

. . . Where is the great and rare man whom I seek? I

* From Johann G. von Herder's "Briefe, das Studium der Theologie betreffend." Fourth edition. Weimar: 1816.

pass through the ranks of lofty poets, to whom altars are built ; and of great orators of the rostrum, who, with a word, could command war and peace, life and death ; I marvel, and pass on ! I wander amongst the great actors, from Roscius to Garrick, with whom everyone weeps, trembles, and turns pale, is roused and melted. I am amazed, and pass on ! I come to the philosophers, who, with creative genius, transport me into a new world, now political, and now philosophical. I admire, and go further ! Where is he whom I seek ? My heart throbs ; I raise my head ; I look in every direction ; I stand still, and hearken ; I hasten wherever I hear a sound ; I listen, and forget everything in the search. . . . "Whom seekest thou, then, perplexed stranger ?" . . . Ah ! you despise the man. I sought him among poets, and Ciceros, and actors, and philosophers, and statesmen ; and I found him not—God's orator ! . . . Where is he, that I may embrace him, press him to my heart, bring him into my home, and never let him leave me ! . . .

Thank God ! I have not sought in vain. I have found, even amongst ourselves, more than one. There are but few, but so much the more precious ought they to be to me ! more precious than constant neighbours, who only contribute to my amusement. . . . Orator of God ! great in silence ; solemn, without poetical magnificence ; eloquent, without Ciceronian periods ; mighty, without dramatic art ; wise, without learned subtlety ; winning, without politic cunning !

Shall I name such ? Would you have me flatter some, and wound others whose names I might omit ? . . . Seek them for yourself, that you may know their value. I give you here a picture from my memory and my heart. If it should please you, seek for some one whom it resembles ; or be like it yourself, if that be possible.

I saw him standing amidst his friends and children. Everyone was attentive to him ; the soul of each seemed fixed upon his face. For the man was speaking to some whom he had baptized ; to some whom he had prepared for communion ; to some whom he had comforted, or whose parents, brothers, children, relatives, he had visited in days of sickness ; to some by the death-beds of whose friends he had stood ; in short, he was speaking to persons in all the chief events of whose lives he had taken an important part. The utterances of such a man have weight.

He stood amidst friends and children, who gathered round him as a father, a man, who was anxious for the welfare of their souls ; who knew them, in their hearts and in their homes ; who came to them in the sorrows of this life with comfort, and who

would prepare their spirits for eternity ; a man whom they knew as pious, upright, and intelligent ; whose every word came from the heart ; who was God's orator !

He was speaking ; and what shall I call his speech ? Sermon ? No ; it was not a sermon in tone, in manner, in introduction, in subject, in form ! Was it an oration ? No ; there was not the air of the orator, there was no *supercilium oratoris*, no strutting, no rhetorical thunder and lightning, no oratorical dash and glitter, and pathos and gesture ! Well, then, it was a conversational religious discourse ? Not at all ; there were no attempts to ingratiate, no dexterous contrivances, no turnings and twistings, no ingenious windings, no surprising sallies ; there was nothing whatever of that kind ! Well, then, was it a theological dissertation ? Not that either ; no dogmatic articles of belief, no scholastic explanations and distinctions, no traces of a profound disposition, no demonstrations and deductions, no aphorisms and quotations ! . . . It must, then, have been a pulpit homily ? Not right yet ; no stiff air, like that of a right reverend gentleman, no wide-sweeping hermeneutical learning, no concordance-like unity, no five-fold applications, no thunder at heretics, no abuse of freethinkers ! None of any of these things. Listen to me, and judge for yourself !

Methinks I see his form—the form of a man whom, unless Nature wishes to deceive by the external appearance, I should forthwith choose as my friend, whom I should trust without hesitation. I thought of the words, “No man that hath a blemish . . . shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the Lord.”

He began by offering a touching prayer for a blessing. In this commencement I heard nothing of violent appeals or terms of endearment addressed to God, full of Ohs ! and Ahs ! as if the man had just come out of heaven, and wanted to get in again by main force ; but I heard a few words which pierced me to the soul. I felt that I was fitly introduced to a solemn exercise.

He took as the basis of his discourse some experiences, an observation, an incident, from human life. The case which he set forth was not unknown to me ; but I had never noticed it with sufficient accuracy ; I had not looked at it from this point of view. I thanked the man in my own mind for this discovery, and so did each of his hearers ; for the matter was right before the eyes of all, and yet we had never seen it. We must listen to this man, for he sees more than we see.

But he does not scold us because we have not seen this or sought for it. He is like a teacher who allows his pupil to feel the joy of himself making a discovery. He has simply led us into our little world, into our circle of action, into our hearts ;

he shows us something as if he were not showing it. "We will go with this man, for with him we shall be happy."

Now let us look at what we have found. It is valuable; we must not throw it away. It is noticeable; we must consider it—consider it from all sides. There is a peculiarity in it, which I cannot quite understand. I am glad that this man is here, who can explain what I do not know, give me full instruction about the matter, and show me its practical bearing. I will use these precious moments; I will take all the benefit of the companionship of this hour. . . . You may call this, that I have thus roughly sketched, the preliminary discourse, the prologue, the introduction, the exordium, or whatever you please; this I know, the speaker has brought me into just the right state of mind in which to listen. I see something of freshness, of importance, of interest, of gratification; I feel all this. He who disturbs me is not my friend—he had better go to sleep.

The preacher has now stated his subject. Familiar, but important! I will not lose a single step. I will not simply follow his thought; I will think with him. He shall speak what I am just now thinking, and what, but for his speaking, I should not have thought, and what I never wish to forget. I feel now quite alone with him; my whole soul is an eye; it will be painful and displeasing, indeed, should any object, by disturbing my attention, dash itself, as it were, against this fixed and attentive orb. I was about to compare myself to the algebraist who is lost in thought when his ideas bear him upon their wings into the infinite, but the comparison does not hold good. Here the soul is concentrated, there it is expanded; but that expansion is felt to be but temporary, for the spirit is conscious of its weakness. Here, however, my spiritual teacher fixes my attention, and my attention *grows into devotion*. It is not by accident that I have come into his presence; we are not alone; God is round about me! Here the soul feels something of that awe which thrills it when, as a new-born angel, it passes into the presence of God.

And now what does this man, upon whose lips I hang, write upon the open tablet of my soul—the tablet which has been cleared of all previous thought and feeling, and the surface of which has been prepared and made impressible by this communion with God? No dry moral doctrines, or second-hand rules of life. These do not stick. The speaker writes no words upon my soul, but he engraves upon it a picture—a picture complete in all its parts, which will never be completely effaced; for at least some traces of it will remain, and a few lines will be sufficient to bring back the likeness of the whole. The idea of

the picture is *ethical*; the filling-up sets forth some circumstance of human character and life; the colouring is given by religion. And so the sermon is complete.

I cannot examine any one of these elements by itself; for the preacher does not present them to me separately. He does not give first morality, then character, then a slight touch of religion to finish up with, like some heathen teachers in Christian pulpits. No; the significant ethical intention and idea of the picture are indicated by the sketches which he gives of human hearts and of common human lives; and every touch of the pencil gleams with the glorious light of religion. It is not a mere whim, but sober truth, to say, If he had kept back one of these elements of his sermon there would have been nothing left.

How then can I grow weary of looking at this picture, in which everything is so full of meaning? Gazing excites desire, for I feel as I gaze that I am grasping truth, in its grandeur, dignity, unity, and beauty; and every look excites new desire, as I constantly discover new lines and touches, which tell me that I am more nearly approaching the ideal which was in the artist's mind. . . . This divine ideal is morality. Had I from eternity looked at it thus, and seen every shadow of the picture, I should be able to say, "The everlasting *Moral*!" And now, every moment, as in gazing I behold a duty, a sweet longing takes possession of me, seeming to steal upon my consciousness from afar, to do this duty. Thou, who hast never felt it sweet to think upon a good action, thou canst never wish to perform one; either the fault is thine, or his who set the ideal before thee. Yes, indeed, if instead of such a picture as this, I see before me dead letters—I mean dry, general moral teachings—I feel no desire enkindled within me by the sight. Dry generalities never make a picture. . . . Here, everything is living! Let me alone; I have no time to be thinking what it was that on other occasions made sermons seem to me tedious, old, and dry. Now, it seems to me difficult to imagine how any can see something worthy of being looked upon, inexhaustible in its charms, and yet slumber. This is one of Raphael's masterpieces; what I have seen before must have been some sign-painter's daub! This man is not showing me that he has studied; he is not lecturing me upon philosophy; but he must be a philosopher indeed, for no one perceives his philosophy, and no one wishes to do so.

How can my interest fail when every line by which the idea of the sermon is brought out is a description of myself. The entire ethical teaching grows into a position which I cannot gainsay. Now my heart is touched, and throbs with agitation;

this case, of which he speaks, is taken from my own experience; I am familiar with it, and must be to the end of my days; this passage applies to no one so well as to myself. I hasten forward to meet my own image, my soul responds to the words, and surely here the interest cannot fail!

Can dignity fail when religion is not used merely as varnish, but makes all lustrous with its beauty? I am in the midst of the great commands of God, and of all His works of benevolence and power. This man does not speak the language of the Bible, but he leads me into its meaning as into a temple—a consecrated place. I hold intercourse with all those men who have been illustrious for their religion, and I walk amongst them. I seem, too, to belong to the same race as they; for this speaker draws from the Bible life and soul, not merely ornament and proof. Without the religious element this picture would be a mere shadow.

Shall I say then that I have been listening to the teaching of morality? Alas, if it were that alone! Has he been speaking about words? No; about realities! Is he then an elegant speaker? No; he has been looking at the realities of life in the light of religion. Once separate them, and everything is destroyed; but look at them together, and what a sermon is the result! A man, who is a son of wisdom, who has a knowledge of human life, and who is deeply versed in the truths of religion—a great and rare man! from whom men may learn virtue, prudence, and religion; who would not listen to such a man? . . .

But as the preacher goes on, his picture springs into activity and life. I find myself brought to a stand. This virtue upon which I gaze so attentively, shall I not practise it? This opportunity, which I see before me, shall I use it, or neglect it? This religion, which I reverence, shall I not carry it into action? He asks me the question, and what answer shall I give? Some answer I *must* give to *myself*. This moment ought to be a time of solemn resolve. I feel very plainly my duty; I see my obligation; I find myself occupied with this kind of thought. "Habit! resolution! Is this the first time that I have resolved!" And now the pressure becomes greater, the blood warmer, the tightness at the breast more intolerable. "So often resolutions and attempts have ended in failure! It will be so again! I will break away from the spell of this preacher! I cannot yield—difficulties—a more convenient season!" But the soul-seeker draws his circle closer and closer still and shuts up every way of escape. A decision must be made; I see here before me the abyss, and yonder the ravishing delights; on every side innumerable motives for decision! I resolve—and so much the

more firmly because it is by myself, before God! He did not not force me; *I* have resolved. And now I taste that higher degree of joy which the soul feels when it no longer thinks of a good action, merely, but thinks of it as its own—*wills it!*

And now what more shall the preacher do? Storm at me, because I fight against offered mercy; because, in my slothfulness, I drag out my life in dreaming delusions, and in dead-alive and foolish goodheartedness? No; he shows me once more my sphere, my world, my calling, and my heart! I see plainly what it is that I have resolved upon, when and how and why I must act. I repeat my resolution; and now he takes me with him before God, that the offered sacrifice of my heart may catch the glow of heaven. Thus he gives me his blessing, his counsel, and whatever he can give. His sermon is at an end. Oh God, my judge, if the consciousness of sincere self-consecration fits me to appear before Thee, here am I this moment. . . .

Shall I begin now vehemently to praise the sermon? Praise it, instead of feeling it, and acting it out? My heart is too full for that! My breast is touched with grief; I am not occupied by definite thoughts, but my soul is like meadows refreshed by gentle rain. What shall I praise? He has not preached learnedly, artistically, finely. I do not know what his arrangement was; therefore don't ask me. I have no gathered flowers, no dazzling climax, to speak of. I know not whether he observed the rules advanced by worthy professors of homiletics. I should wrong the man if I were to begin to praise him for the skilful mechanism of his discourse; I should wrong myself still more if I were to applaud him as an excellent actor. . . .

BRIEF NOTICES OF BOOKS.

Unity of Creed the Union of the Christian Church. London: James Nisbet & Co. 1866.

Truth and Opinion. A Letter to John Eliot Howard, Esq., on Church Discipline and Christian Charity, in their relation to Supposed Error. London: Simpkin, Marshall, & Co. 1866.

HERE are two very noticeable pamphlets, well worth our observing, as signs of the times, at least, if not indeed for something more. In

both we have earnest Christian men, zealous for God's truth, and fervently longing for the blessed unity of all who call Christ Master. But they propose to us opposite methods, and we must use our own best judgment.

The former pamphlet emanates from a considerable number of clergymen and laymen of different ecclesiastical bodies in Scotland, proposing a Conference with a view to bring about ultimately a perfect consent on the meaning of Scripture. The fundamental principle is, that the Bible is its own interpreter; and to set forth the meaning and importance of the assertion, the following propositions are maintained :—

"I. The Bible, which is the Word of God, and the only rule of faith and duty to men, contains a Divine record of doctrines to be believed and precepts to be obeyed.

"II. This Divine record is infallible, and has only one true meaning, and therefore while all care for the purity of the text is necessary, equal care for the purity of the Truth is, if possible, more necessary,—the text being only the vehicle of the Truth.

"III. It is the duty of every man to study diligently and devoutly this Divine and Infallible Record for himself, and he who does so will, from time to time, come to a certain and accurate knowledge of Doctrines which he ought to believe, and Precepts which he ought to obey.

"IV. Whoever adopts or adheres to a false interpretation of any Doctrine or Precept taught in the Bible, whether secondary or fundamental in importance, though he do so only from thoughtlessness or prejudice, and not from design, cannot but be regarded as blameworthy, and as bringing reproach upon the Word of God.

"V. Since in every case of conflicting opinions one of them must be wrong, the existence of conflicting interpretations of any of the Doctrines or Precepts of the Word of God is a great evil in the Christian Church, the culpability of which attaches to the party whose interpretation is wrong.

"If these propositions be well founded, and the legitimate exposition of the truth that the Bible, whose sense is not manifold but one, is its own interpreter, the question naturally arises, Has the time not come to form an Association whose object should be to labour by prayer to God, and every other suitable means that may be available in His Providence, for the removal of the scandal and the injury to which the cause of Christ has been long exposed, in consequence of the prevalence of conflicting interpretations of the Bible, even in the Protestant evangelical community?

"By their contradictory views of important statements in the Divine and Infallible Record, the counsels of God's people have been distracted, and their energies wastefully dissipated. It is only by the gradual disappearance of this conflict of convictions, in matters of faith and duty, that the fellowship and brotherhood of the Christian Church can be expected to reach its proper development, and her evangelistic work to be blessed with full success."

Among the seventy-one names attached to a memorial based on these propositions, we find those of Drs. James and Robert Buchanan, Dr. Cairns, Dr. Eadie, Dr. Patrick Fairbairn, Dr. Guthrie, Dr. Lindsay, Dr. Paterson, Dr. Andrew Thomson, and many others of equal note. The memorial is addressed to the Executive Committee of the Evangelical Alliance, as a body believed to be better adapted than

any other for seeking to accomplish the object proposed. And in addition to the five propositions above given, nine others are submitted "as to the Scriptural nature of Church organization and Christian fellowship."

Among other means proposed is, "The promotion of intercourse between the representatives of denominations which adopt some plan of co-operation, with the view of their reconsidering, and by degrees ultimately correcting, their opposite interpretations of the doctrines and precepts taught in the Word of God, so as to remove the only tenable ground for their continued separation from each other : &c."

It would be superfluous for the *Christian Spectator*, so well-known to be founded on broad undenominational principles, to express the hearty interest of its friends and supporters in everything that tends to the removal of all barriers that separate Christian from Christian. And for the holy desire in which this proposal originates, and for the high character and devoted zeal of the faithful men whose names support it, we have the utmost respect. And yet the second, if not, indeed, the very first, feeling excited within us by the perusal of this pamphlet was one of admiration. We felt as a man waking out of sleep in a strange place, who wonders where he is, and what time of day it may be. And then we thought of the many admirable attempts that have been already made to bring Christians to unanimity of opinion by discussion of their differences. And scene after scene came vividly before us : Luther and Zwingli, in debate on the sacrament of the Supper, when the former, at the commencement of the proceedings, wrote on the cloth that covered the table, in large letters, "HOC EST MEUM CORPUS !" and, at the close, took the cloth from the table, held it up open before him, and advanced towards his opponent with it as if he would cover him therewith. Luther stuck to the plain declaration of our Lord, as Romanists do to this day. Zwingli presided, or at least was present, at the drowning of the Baptists, for whose literal understanding of the word "baptize" he had no respect, and uttered the sorry jest, "Let the dippers be dipped."

And this case will answer our purpose as well as any, for it is indeed a fair specimen. We all know what the Baptists affirm, on the one hand, and we know also that many of the most scholarly of those who follow the general method of Christendom (excepting the Greek Church and the Baptist body) cheerfully concede to them that the balance of philological evidence is in their favour, and that it may even be indisputable that the ordinance was originally administered in the way affirmed. But what then ? The strength of the position held by those who sprinkle rather than dip is not in the least affected ; else, how could they so cheerfully make the concession ? which, be it observed, is not extorted, but freely volunteered. The Congregationalist (or American Presbyterian) Moses Stuart, and the Episcopalian Dean Stanley, with a host of others equal to them in learning, continue to sprinkle as unquestioningly after their concession as before it. Or, to pass on to doctrine,—is it conceivable that any possible discussion of their points of difference could have brought Fletcher of Madeley and Toplady to

any other agreement than at best an agreement to differ? But the theme is so large, and our space so limited, that we cannot even venture on a beginning of the treatment it demands. Our little knowledge and our much ignorance, our conscious or unconscious philosophy, our social and political tendencies, and a thousand other things blended with these, quite as much as the pure critical element in us, conduce to the judgment we form on the doctrinal or ecclesiastical points we find in our New Testaments. The differences of opinion that obtained, not only in the Apostolic Churches, but among the Apostles themselves, on some matters, are full of suggestiveness, as the way in which the Apostle Paul treated these differences is full of perennial instructiveness. And we incline to the belief that even in the nineteenth century "the more excellent way" will still be found to be that which is pointed out in the First Epistle to the Corinthians.

We regret to have left ourselves no room for an adequate notice of the second of these two pamphlets, but as the price is so small (it is published at sixpence) we will hope that our readers will obtain and ponder it. It seems to have been caused by Mr. Howard's "Caution against the Darbyites," and is a bold plea for the largest mutual toleration of opinion, founded, to a great extent, on the broad difference between opinion and truth. Even those who may not altogether agree with the author will not be able to peruse his tract without benefit. After all, the greater unity we are all longing for will have to be effected, we believe, by taking the renewed Christian heart rather than the disciplined brain as the *novum organon* of Christian brotherhood and fellowship. Of all the formulas that can be devised, we incline to think that this, after all, will bear the palm and achieve the triumph, viz.:—

"GRACE BE WITH ALL THEM THAT LOVE OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST."

Characteristics of Christ's Teaching, drawn from the Sermon on the Mount. By C. T. VAUGHAN, D.D., Vicar of Doncaster. London: Alexander Strahan. 1866.

If any persons should wonder at the frequency with which Dr. Vaughan comes before the public as an author of sermons, they may understand that "the profits of this little volume, like those of one preceding and one following it, are devoted to the assistance of a costly undertaking, the re-building of the Church Schools of my parish." But the readers of Dr. Vaughan's sermons will not require any such apologetic notice; for, though they may not often find anything very original or striking, and would look in vain for those flights of fancy, or rhetorical flourishes, or bits of poetry which make the fortune of so many a popular preacher, they know that they will always have in Dr. Vaughan's discourses the best results of earnest and conscientious study and thought, calmly and equably presented by a man who is more free than perhaps most men from one great vice of the modern pulpit—self-consciousness. Dr. Vaughan manifestly cares only to discharge his high duties as a faithful servant of our common Master, and we are sure that in this busy, bustling, noisy,

fussy age, living in an atmosphere of most questionable excitement, and all of us in danger of becoming more and more Americanized, and adopting "go-a-head" as our noblest motto, the calm and simple teaching of Dr. Vaughan on a Sunday, must be a most valuable influence. Full gladly would we often exchange the so-called "zeal and earnestness" of some amongst us for the sober, devout, reverent, and practical tone which pervades all the pulpit labours of the excellent vicar of Doncaster. If some of the Episcopal clergy might very well learn of some of their Nonconformist brethren, we are quite sure that our Dissenting congregations would have only to be congratulated if they could be brought to prefer the solid and the practical to the flashy, or fervent, or exciting. Alas! how many a congregation as good as insists on a style of preaching whose practical results in every-day life, in the home, in the shop, in the social circle, are simply—*nil*! We reckon Dr. Vaughan among the workmen that need not to be ashamed.

Ecclesia Dei: The Place and Functions of the Church in the Divine Order of the Universe, and its relations with the World. London: Alexander Strahan. 1866.

LIKE *Ecce Homo* this work also is anonymous, but the author deals with his great subject in a way which impresses the reader with considerable respect. He brings to his task the competence supplied by adequate learning, patient industrious research, and a serious and religious spirit, combined with great earnestness of purpose. The reader is sometimes reminded of Isaac Taylor, sometimes of Hooker, and anon of St. Augustine's *Civitas Dei*. The book is one of those which elevate the soul by the sweep and grandeur of the survey that is taken, and quicken and strengthen the mind by the intellectual vigour displayed. But while signs are by no means rare of a catholic and unsectarian spirit, we fear that the idea of parochial and diocesan organization has perhaps rather too much hold of the author for us to flatter ourselves with the belief that in *Ecclesia Dei* we have at last the word for which so many in our day seem anxiously waiting in expectant attitude. The question put by various classes to the Jordan prophet, "What shall *we* do also?" is to-day on many lips; but though we cannot say that the full answer is supplied, we recognize the present volume as a valuable contribution, sure it cannot be read by any thoughtful and candid Christian without much benefit of the best kind. For ourselves, we confess, we read in the signs of the times some tokens that seem to intimate a possible increase for a time of the process of disintegration, and a still further intensification of the individualism which is already so conspicuous, and often painfully so. And if we thought of this as any other than a temporary stage, perhaps necessarily to be passed in the way to happier combination and a deeper unity of the spirit, we should be more saddened by it than we are. Such books as *Ecclesia Dei* cannot but be helpful to us all.

(For Books Received see the cover.)

THE CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR.

OCTOBER, 1866.

THE ROUND TABLE.

CHAPTER XL.

THE EVENING WALK AND TALK—THE NARRATIVE CONTINUED—A
FIRST VISIT—GOING AWAY DEFERRED—DR. SMITH'S INQUIRIES—
IMPOSSIBLE TO SAY—MR. SYDNEY RECEIVES A VISITOR.

WHEN Mr. Sydney bore off Edith Langston from the Dorcas meeting "so easily," as poor Miss Moppett thought, the two, as we have seen, did not take the absolutely shortest way home. Nor do I know any special reason why they should. The evening was still early, the air was fresh and soft, as one sometimes gets even later in the season than the end of September, and it was so pleasant to the now motherless girl, whose girlhood had been prematurely brought to a close by the series of painful bereavements which had terminated by leaving her the only child of her widowed father, I say it was so pleasant to Edith Langston to find herself with one whom it was so natural to regard tenderly and to confide in as in an elder brother, that somehow they half unconsciously, I fancy, made a rather circuitous route. Mr. Sydney led her to talk of all that had occurred during his three years of absence, and many were the pathetic reminiscences she was encouraged to indulge in. And then about her father, and his health, and the future, till at length Mr. Sydney said—

"Edith, my child, you must leave Bablyk-Hythe, I am sure."

"Oh," she replied, "I don't think Papa will be induced to leave, unless the leadings of Providence are very, very, plain

indeed. This was his first and only Church, and it would be difficult for a stranger to believe how the people, many of them at least, live in his heart. Half the congregation have been born and grown up under his eye, and he looks upon them as his own children, I am sure. And many of them, too, regard him with almost filial affection. And then they are endeared to him by much that he has silently endured for their sakes. And, besides, the grave-yard is so sacred to him ; no, I don't think he would easily leave Bablyk-Hythe. And he would not like to go among strangers. I have often heard him say he could not now take root in a strange soil."

"But, Edith, I see that his health is suffering, and I have consulted Doctor Smith, who knows him so well, and who is of opinion that a thorough change now might be of incalculable service to him, and in fact would probably be the means of prolonging life to a green old age even."

Edith was silent. The mention of the physician's name, indeed, and his opinion, made her suddenly grave, and even filled her in an instant with sad apprehensions, and I know not what melancholy imaginings. Oh, if anything should happen to her father, how could she endure life ! Her whole life was bound up with his. Her thoughts had never strayed beyond the holy precincts of home. She was "fancy-free," for no one yet had sought to win her heart, and she was not a girl to send her thoughts roving, butterfly-like, hither and thither, nobody knows where. Her very imagination was maiden. And the idea of her father's health being a matter of grave consideration to Mr. Sydney and the physician struck her with a cold chill, as though the Ice-king had suddenly caught her in his arms. Her companion perceived the effect of his words, and hastened to re-assure her. He had a plan, he said, in his head, which, if Mr. Langston could be brought to consent to, would, he thought, be the very means of thoroughly re-establishing his health, and doing much, in time, to recover his spirits even. But Edith said—

"I do not think that even for the preservation of his life he would leave Bablyk-Hythe, unless he believed it to be plainly the will of God that he should strike his tent."

"And do you wish to remain for ever here, Edith ?" he asked.

"It would be home to me wherever Papa was," she replied. "I am not so rooted and grounded in Bablyk-Hythe, though I was born here, as to be unable to quit it. I have some very dear young friends in the place—not many it is true ;—but Papa is made so uncomfortable by a few persons that I sometimes wish he could, like David's imaginary bird, fly away and be at rest."

And then Mr. Sydney turned the conversation, and talked pleasantly of old times, and all the little nothings that it would be folly to report, but which, at the moment, are often possessed of a strange and almost boundless charm. And so they wandered on and on, with the silent stars looking down so softly and kindly on them, till even the sedgy bank of the river was reached; and where was the wonder if the blandness of the autumn evening, blending with the tenderness of so many of their mutual reminiscences, made that quiet walk in the gloaming an hour of deep though almost unrecognized deliciousness to, at all events, one of them?

In the meanwhile the Captain had carried somewhat farther the narrative of which Mr. Sydney himself had given the essential features. And what he had to describe was their return together to England, after having however insisted on spending a few days in Damascus, since they were so near to it. "Then," said he, "we took the steamer at Beyrout, and, on arriving in England, proceeded at once to Yarnton Hall, as a matter of course. Sydney would not consent to my leaving him, so I accompanied him. We stayed at the hotel the first night, till arrangements could be made for the first strange interview between the unknown father and son. And next day, after a long business talk with the lawyer, Sydney was taken to the Hall, I, of course, insisting on staying behind. So all the details of that strange and distressing meeting I know only from his report."

It was not to be wondered at that Mr. Sydney should have left to his friend to describe, if he would, all the painful embarrassment and awkwardness of that meeting. The old man's sin—the sin of his youth—had found him out (as, thank God, it always does, sooner or later, find us all out), and found him out too at a time when it was agonizing in the extreme to be compelled to face the terrible facts which it had given birth to. Between the old Earl and the hitherto unrecognized son, whose existence was the greatest misfortune of the hour, and the source of so much terrible complication and distress, anything like affection was of course out of the question. The son saw chiefly in the diseased and prematurely old man the destroyer of his mother's peace and the shortener of her days; while the old man himself, except as withheld by a conscience, which, however, was the bringer-in of remorse rather than repentance, could have as bitterly as vainly wished that the Desert had seen, bleaching on its sands, the bones of the son he had wronged from his birth, and never known, and who could not now enter on his rights without in an instant reducing the hitherto undoubted heir to the most distressing position.

Graham was loud in his praises of both the young men, that is of Sydney, and his half-brother, Lord Furlie, while scorn predominated over pity as he described the abject state of the old earl. The introduction, it seems, had been made by the family lawyer, who saw that the opening of the budget naturally devolved on him. So after the introduction—the old man and Sydney gazing on one another for some time in perfect silence, the latter bowing stiffly, and the former confusedly inclining his head a little, as best he could, lying in his bed—Mr. Finlay (although each now knew all he could tell) at once, with lawyer-like order and precision, began at the very beginning, and narrated in the presence of the three most deeply interested, but without the use of a single epithet or adjective, and in the driest manner conceivable, the entire case from beginning to end:—How the present earl, before succeeding to the title and estates, had, under the name of Sydney, privately married at Cumnor, in the county of Oxford, Winifred Rivers, the orphan daughter of Theobald Rivers, Esq., of the Lodge, and had kept her for a time in a distant part of the country, viz., first at Ross, in the county of Hereford, afterwards at Cromer, in the county of Norfolk;—that he had then, by an agent of the name of Bligh, succeeded in persuading her that the marriage was a false one, and null *ab initio*;—that in the year 18—, she, being the lawful wife of the aforesaid present Earl of Yarnton, did, in the parish of St. Mary's, in the city of Gloucester, give birth to a son, who was baptized in the parish church of St. Mary's under the name of Frank Sydney;—that, finally, the lady died, and was buried, at Bablyk-Hythe, in the county of ———, in the year 18—, and that the Frank Sydney here present is the undoubted son of the aforesaid lady, Winifred Rivers, and the Earl of Yarnton, then the Hon. Mr. Sydney Furlie; and that the aforesaid Frank Sydney was born in lawful wedlock, and is the rightful heir of the Right Hon. the Earl of Yarnton;—and, that, further, the marriage between the earl and his late countess, having been contracted during the life-time of the legitimate though unrecognized wife, was of necessity illegal and invalid. And so the lawyer stated formally, in the mutual presence of the three men most interested, the facts which each was already fully aware of. He concluded by recognizing that the facts of the case were known only to four or five persons, on whose honourableness every reliance might be placed; and he trusted, though for his own part he did not yet exactly see how, that it might be possible to enter into some arrangement by which the just claims of all parties might be met without any violent disruption of existing relations.

Mr. Sydney was impatient for him to conclude, and forthwith

declared his intention of waiving at once and for ever all the titles and advantages which it appeared would legally devolve on him. He had been born, he said, in a private sphere of life, and in retirement he had passed his days hitherto, and so he would continue to live. Lord Furlie had grown up in the conviction that in due time the title and estates would descend to him, and he, Mr. Sydney, would be no party to a change which would be so cruel in its effects on him and the lady whom, without any misgivings, he had married. For himself, he not only preferred private life, but any great change would be most repugnant to him; and he was determined that, as his mother had gone to her rest, the subsequent marriage should never by him be questioned, and he declared himself ready to enter into any engagement, sign any document, bind himself in any way that the earl's lawyer might deem sufficiently stringent, to renounce for himself and his heirs all claim to the inheritance. He even offered to bind himself never to marry. Lord Furlie was not behind his new-found brother in nobleness, and would not consent to enjoy what of right belonged to another. Only in meanness and in wrong, he said, was there shame, and he would rather live with truth and honour in whatever lot God might place him than wear a title and hold estates which were not his by right. The two young men were well matched; but could neither of them have inherited their nobleness of nature from the miserable man in whose presence all this was going on, and who looked from one to the other in silent amazement and confusion.

The lawyer pointed out all the legal difficulties of the position, and as Sydney in the most absolute terms adhered to his determination to waive his legal claims, and leave Lord Furlie in undisturbed possession of the name and estates—a determination, he said, which he had formed from the very first, and had had plenty of time on the homeward voyage maturely to consider, and which was only strengthened by time—Mr. Finlay had to remind them that it would not be satisfactory for Lord Furlie to occupy a position which was liable at any future day to be called in question, and that, if Mr. Sydney's noble resolution was to take effect, the greatest care must be taken to make it legally valid. Mr. Sydney offered, if no other way could be devised to satisfy the legal necessities, to join the earl in cutting off the entail, so that he might be free to convey all to Lord Furlie *de novo*. But nothing could be hastily determined on, and for the present it was left to Mr. Finlay to obtain the best judgment from some of the most trustworthy members of the profession. The young lord, however, would listen to nothing that Mr. Sydney could urge, until the lawyer suggested that the

interests of all would, perhaps, be saved, and their feelings satisfied, if an estate which the earl had acquired by purchase, and which did not come into the entail, would be accepted by Mr. Sydney. It consisted of a mansion and lands of the yearly value of some nine or ten thousand pounds, and might be made over at once by deed of gift, or in any other way. And he proposed also that a certain sum of ready money, which he knew the earl could well afford to give, should be added to the estate. "However," said the relator of this strange story, "I must not weary you with all the details. Many and prolonged were the conferences that had to be held, and it was finally agreed by all parties that the arrangement proposed by the lawyer should be acted on, and Sydney entered into a bond to sign whatever documents might be necessary to secure the undisturbed succession of Lord Furlie. And so now," continued the Captain, "you see how it was that several weeks passed by, after our arrival in England, before we could follow the promptings of our hearts and come to Bablyk-Hythe. For it was altogether out of the question to leave Yarnton Hall until everything was fixed, and nothing left to be done but what belonged to the lawyers. And, indeed, Mr. Finlay prepared forthwith the conveyance of the estate that Sydney agreed to accept, and it was sealed, signed, and delivered before we left. And then, of course, it seemed almost necessary to go and see it, and take possession."

"And where is it?" asked Mr. Langston, very naturally.

"It is in the county of —," replied the Captain; "not more than two or three miles from the county-town. And as delightful a spot as one would meet with in a month's march. But it would have been amusing, I dare say, for some invisible observer, to note the way in which Sydney entered on his new possession."

"So I should think," said the other. "He must have been full of various and conflicting feelings. A thousand lights and shadows would play quickly over the face of a soul so imaginative and sensitive as his. The bewildering strangeness of the recent circumstances, the wronged and saddened life of his mother—and what son grown to man's estate ever preserved so tenderly respectful and fond an affection for a mother as he?—and, then, perhaps, still more especially, there would be the deeply pensive and fond but vain picturing of what might have been, had the 'Mayflower' been spared. Yes, I can easily conceive that very seldom indeed has any man entered on an estate with the feelings with which Mr. Sydney would take possession of — what did you say was the name of the place?"

"I don't think I have mentioned the name yet; but the house itself is called Gaunt House."

"Gaunt House! To children the name would have rather an eerie sound I fancy, recalling the more terrible ditties of their nurseries, Bluebeard and I know not what. But I suppose the name is an ancient one, and comes down from the time of the famous Duke of Lancaster."

"You are right," replied the other. "There are some portions of the building that are very ancient, and have evidently for a long time now been preserved with great care, chiefly for the sake of their antiquity. But the original portions are few. The house has been added to and altered at so many different times, and by men of so great variety of taste, that a stranger would be sorely puzzled to assign its date or style. It is, however, a charming place, I assure you; and I am sure you will be delighted with it. And so will Edith."

Mr. Langston sighed. The reader will scarcely wonder, perhaps, that we have so often now to record a similar manifestation of the undertone of his mind. He had of late gone through so many sad experiences, that he must be pardoned if the prevailing music of his soul fell naturally into a minor key. And the strange story he had that evening listened to seemed to be placing a distance between himself and his friends which every added incident appeared to increase. As when two dear friends, up in some high moorland district, stand together, hand-in-hand, beside some bubbling spring welling up in sweet obscurity, half-hidden by tall grasses and weeds, and walk on, still hand-in-hand, till the tiny silver thread of a stream widens between them, and they loose hands, half-unconsciously, and still wandering on in loving discourse, till the tiny silver thread becomes a rivulet, and still keeps widening on (as Jean Ingelow so beautifully paints it in a poem,* which, like the night wind of autumn, has brought I know not what plaintive *Æolian* strains from a certain harp, whose strings are living fibres)—till, hand-in-hand becomes, alas! no longer anything but a most pathetic and even mournful reminiscence.

But presently Mr. Langston remarked:—

"You were going to tell me of the first visit to Gaunt House. But it will take me some time to get reconciled to the name. I almost shiver as I utter it."

"Well," resumed the Captain, "we reached the village of Eislip towards the end of a fine afternoon, and after some refreshment at the little village inn, and making some inquiries of the landlord, we proceeded to 'the great House' as the people of the neighbourhood call it. We found that rumour had already announced that 'the old Yarl' (as the folks called him) had

* "Divided."

parted with the property, and that a strange gentleman 'from foreign parts' was every day expected to come and take possession. And the people at the inn evidently suspected one of us to be the new owner. It was getting towards evening, as I have said, as we turned in through a kind of deer-park paling to a plantation, half wood, half shrubbery, where ancient forest-trees and younger ones were scattered about, mingled with underwood; and here and there were open spaces covered with fern; and the cuttings through a wood gave distant glimpses of blue hills, till the winding-path brought us to a more cultivated part where nature had received assistance from art, and the shrubbery became garden-like. And so we came on to the lawn in front of the house. Sydney was almost nervous with the feelings of the moment, and it was some time before we rang the bell. Mr. Finlay had written to say that the new owner would soon arrive, and consequently the housekeeper was rather anxiously on the *qui vive*. We were received very respectfully, of course. The first room we entered was quite a baronial hall, hung round with relics of armour, helmets, breast-plates, gauntlets, and tattered banners that had waved on many a field, interspersed with arms of various dates, and huge horns of the old Irish elk, &c. From that we passed into a cabinet, where Sydney asked me to leave him to himself for a few minutes. I should think he was there alone for more than half-an-hour, till it was getting quite dusk, and the housekeeper and I, after waiting for some time in the old hall, were getting fidgetty. So I tapped at the door, and, on entering, found the dear fellow almost overcome by his emotions. However, I cannot tell you all the details of our visit, which would also occupy too much time now. Sydney declined to sleep in the house that night, although everything was ready, the housekeeper said, and we returned to the village inn. But next day, of course, there were many things to see to. The housekeeper was continued in her post for the present, at all events, and, in fact, the whole establishment. And, after going over the estate with the bailiff, and making whatever arrangements were necessary, we left the place, and gladly enough came on to Bablyk-Hythe. But Gaunt House is a large one, and, as Sydney said, ought to have a large family circle, and a constant supply of friends, to make it sufficing as a home, especially to such wanderers as we have been."

When Mr. Sydney returned with Edith he saw at a glance that his friend had learned the conclusion of his story. And, on meeting, thought only a short hour or so had elapsed, each, for a moment, but more instinctively than consciously, looked earnestly into the eye of the other; but each also found the

same clear open soul calmly expressing itself there, and the shake of the hand and the tone of the voice said more plainly than words:—"We are still the same; we are not of those whose relations are so shallow and slight as to be capable of being affected by circumstances." Thank God, antique and noble friendship has not yet been rendered altogether impossible. Still there are souls capable of something more than the mere acquaintanceship which is what, to a considerable extent, now usurps the sacred name. Some of us perhaps have been so favoured of God as to know (or to have known) those from whom we believe—in flat contradiction to the world's creed—we could have received, or on whom we could have conferred, any amount or kind of help and benefit, without an iota of change being thereby introduced into the happy relation which subsisted. Aristotle's definition of friendship ought certainly to be more deeply honoured as true in Christian than in the old pagan lands—"one soul in two bodies." For Christ has given us an insight into what it ought to be, which surely there are some who delight to recognize. And yet this nineteenth century, we fear, does not abound in instances of the kind which the old Greek was thinking of. And the writer of the present narrative is quite prepared to learn that his simple record is set down as the dream of an idle romancer. Still, however, it is but the very truth that these three men were so vitally united by a three-fold cord of life that the world's "impossible" would be to them the most simply natural thing imaginable. Thoroughly did Mr. Langston approve of the decision his younger friend had come to, in foregoing his birthright, and leaving the young lord in full and undisturbed possession of all that from his childhood he had been brought up to believe his own. And he was glad that Sydney would be Sydney still. But he felt that their paths of life would be for the most part distinct, if not indeed divergent. Mr. Sydney must evidently live on his estate, to discharge the duties devolving on a man to whom in God's providence such a position is assigned. And he was rather saddened to think how large a distance intervened between Gaunt House and Bablyk-Hythe. Still, he could now and then steal away from his ministerial duties to visit his friends, and they perhaps still oftener might be able to visit him. At all events, the dear God knows best how to order all things for us.

Early in the following week the two friends were to leave Bablyk-Hythe, for a short time, for Gaunt House, and it was agreed that nothing should be told to Edith till after their departure; but when the day at first fixed on for their departure came, they were still inmates at the Gables. And that week

passed, and another, and still they lingered. Yet it was not from any alteration of purpose, nor was it merely that they found the renewal of the intercourse of the days of "auld lang syne" too pleasant to be interrupted, for indeed it was almost necessary for Mr. Sydney to be at Gaunt House. But anxious friendship detained them at Bablyk-Hythe. How could they leave Edith Langston, when her father was lying in that same chamber where, when his first-born was taken from him, we remember, he had the little miniature memorial tomb, and which room had been the scene of so many blessed and happy, so many anxious and sad, experiences. There he lay, pale and prostrate, and all who came in trod softly, and spoke in a low hushed tone. He had been brought hither on the Sunday morning following the explanation we have reported. His sermon had been prepared as usual, but it had never been preached; it remained in its black case, and indeed was not taken out for many a day. The physician would not for some time express any very positive opinion, either as to the precise cause, or the probable issue of the illness. All the symptoms showed that the heart was the organ chiefly affected, but whether there was serious organic mischief, or only some severe functional disturbance, was more than at first he felt authorized to affirm; but, at all events, the illness was serious, and the greatest care was requisite. The physician was minute in his inquiries whether any other great trouble than the bereavement Mr. Langston had sustained had come upon him; whether any secret grief or anxiety was preying upon him. Had he experienced any distressing losses? was there anything in any of his relations that tended to keep up a sort of corrosive action on the mind? as far as Doctor Smith could judge at present, he said, it was mainly through the mind, he thought, that the bodily organs were affected.

"Do you know, my dear Sir," he said one day to Mr. Sydney, who had insisted on showing how famously he could nurse, and who was as unremitting in his attentions as a son; "do you know, Sir, that there are more men, and especially more women, murdered among us than the coroner ever takes cognizance of?"

"Murdered!" exclaimed the other. The conversation took place in Mr. Langston's study, after the professional visit to the patient upstairs. "Murdered! Do pray explain yourself, my dear Doctor."

"There are some organizations," he said, "that are little fitted to bear what they have to bear from some who stand in very close relations to them. I have a patient at this very time, who will, ere long, be laid to rest in the quiet churchyard, where the wicked cease from troubling, and when she dies, 'killed by inches' might be written on her grave stone. Her husband is a

mean, cruel, dastardly fellow, who has long made her hourly life such that death, by any means whatever, would be welcome to her. Few persons ever witness any very noticeable unkindness, but he is an adept in the art of torturing; he knows how to lay a rough finger on the naked nerve, and send a shock through the frame that will keep it quivering for days. Many a heart-disease, I assure you, has its origin in the home which an evil man has turned into a sort of dungeon of the Inquisition. We physicians read many a domestic tragedy in the symptoms that come under our notice; and many a cold-blooded brute that lives on good terms enough with himself and with the world deserves the brand on his forehead as much as ever Cain did. Nay, Cain, who, I suppose, felled his brother at a blow, was merciful in comparison with these domestic murderers."

"I can quite believe what you say, Doctor," replied the other. "I too know one whom a husband's cruelty consigned to a premature grave; and I have often thought that, with sensitive natures, the wounds inflicted on the feelings must tend to disturb the heart's action, and so derange the whole of the vital economy."

"Why, yes," said the Doctor, "if we were all kind to one another, as the Founder of Christianity enjoined, life would have a better chance. But He died of a broken heart, you know."

"Whatever the sincerest friendship and the most devoted love can do to save your patient, Doctor Smith, will be most anxiously and tenderly done, I assure you. And, with the professional skill" (the Doctor bowed) "he enjoys, I indulge the hope that he may come round again. Miss Langston is a model of a daughter."

"Oh, I have no doubt whatever that in his home all his relations are of the happiest character;—but—but—I was thinking—I mean, it occurred to me—you know, Mr. Sydney, I am not a Dissenter, and so have no personal knowledge, but I have heard that the lot of a minister of that persuasion is sometimes one that is peculiarly trying, especially to men of culture and refinement, and quick and generous feelings. I know nothing of their particular economy, but you often see a very marked difference between a rector or vicar of the Church and a Dissenting minister. I mean, even when the men themselves are in all respects equals, or would be equals, if alike placed in the same social position. There is a rosy, cheerful, easy-going expression in the countenance and very tones of voice even, and whole manner of our rector, for example, such as I never saw exhibited by any clergyman of the Dissenting persuasion. My patient upstairs, now, I have heard was Oxford bred, and I dare say if he had gone into the Church would have looked the rector as well as Mr. Thomson.

He has naturally a fine constitution, which he has never abused; his physical labours cannot be more than he ought to manage without discomfort; and yet, somehow, he has for some time, even before his sad domestic grief came on him, given me the impression that something was operating which ought not to be, and that kept his health considerably below par. How did this seizure come on? Do pray tell me the particulars as exactly as you can. I have not had the opportunity of seeing you alone before."

"Well," replied Mr. Sydney, "we all walked together to chapel on Sunday morning, and very leisurely, for the weather was fine, and would have made it pleasant to worship in God's great temple. Mr. Langston seemed to feel the air, and the sunshine, and the blue sky, and the influences of nature, very soothing. He remarked that they wonderfully helped to prepare the spirit for the exercises before him, and said quietly, as if more to himself than to us, 'I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go up to the House of the Lord. It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord, and to show forth the praises of the Most High.' We separated at the chapel gate, and left him to go into the vestry. So we went in and took our places in the pew. After a while the deacons came out of the vestry, and ——"

"I beg your pardon, the deacons are a kind of churchwarden, I believe?" interposed the physician.

"Something of that sort," replied Mr. Sydney; "but instead of being changed annually, they are generally chosen for life, I believe, and have much more influence for good or evil, I fancy, than churchwardens usually have."

"Yes, I have heard something about these things occasionally, but more from common report than any altogether trustworthy source. But, tell me, have they much to do with the minister? Can they interfere much with his comfort? Who are our friend's deacons? Does the minister himself appoint them, and can he dismiss them if they are offensive to him or unwelcome?"

Mr. Sydney smiled. "Deacons," said he, in reply, "can be a great comfort and blessing to a minister, or they can be a great curse to him and the Church."

"Then why not get rid of them?" asked the Doctor.

"Ah, my dear Sir," replied the other, "every system has its own good and evil, its advantages and disadvantages, and I suppose it is generally found difficult to alter things. 'As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,' seems to be the favourite formula with all bodies."

"I know," said the Doctor, "that Mr. Kierney attends the Nonconformist chapel; pray, does he happen to be one of these deacons, as you call them?"

"Yes," Mr. Sydney said. But he said it as though he were not very proud of the connection.

"Humph!" was the doctor's response. And he took out his massive gold snuff box—which had been presented to him by a grateful patient, whose history, though interesting, must not find its way into the present narrative—and slowly, and half abstractedly, took a pinch, and then offered the box to Mr. Sydney, who, however, gently bowed an intimation of his non-initiation into the practice.

"Humph!" interjected he again. "All the town knows him pretty well, and I pity Mr. Langston with all my heart if such a Nabal as that has much to do with him. But what were you going to say?" and he took out his watch, and looked through the window to see if his carriage was near; "you were going to tell me how it happened."

"After Mr. Kierney, who was the last of the deacons to leave the vestry, and had lingered a few moments behind the others, had come into the chapel, there was a longer interval than usual before Mr. Langston made his appearance, and when he appeared I was struck with the change in his countenance and manner. He had gone into the vestry calm and peaceful, and pleasantly anticipating the service; he came out looking disturbed, and almost ruffled, and deadly pale. He paused at the foot of the pulpit stairs, as if hesitating whether to ascend them or not, and again when he was half way up. But when he was in his old place his countenance resumed its usual expression. He was longer than common, however, in his private prayer; and when he began the service his voice slightly faltered, and it seemed as if he were obliged to divide even shortish sentences for want of breath. Suddenly, he stopped in the middle,—uttered an involuntary exclamation, and fell back on the seat of the pulpit, convulsed. Captain Graham and myself were by his side in an instant, and bore him fainting into the vestry; and as soon as a carriage could be procured, we removed him hither, and you were sent for."

"Ah! I see;" said the physician, and was silent for some moments, then resumed, "Do you know, Mr. Sydney, that Sir Benjamin one day actually said to me that it would be well if some member of our profession would make the affections that Dissenting ministers are subject to a matter of careful study. And Doctor Gregory told me he had often observed a quite peculiar class of symptoms in their case, and different from any that the clergy come to him with."

"Do you mean affections of the throat, Doctor?"

"The throat?" No, not 'clergyman's sore throat;' that might always be avoided. No, no, not the throat. However, if

we get our friend up again, as I will not yet despair of, you must take him away from Bablyk-Hythe. I suppose he can give up the living at any time?"

Mr. Sydney smiled at the notion of "the living," but said he hoped that this illness, with the peremptory commands of the physician would make Mr. Langston more willing to leave Bablyk-Hythe than he had hitherto been able to anticipate. And Doctor Smith, rising, restored the massive gold snuff-box to its snug place—paused a moment or two, and looked on the ground—seemed about to speak, but said nothing—ejaculated another "Humph!"—(though I am not sure but the sound would be better expressed by a simple 'M!')—looked up, and fixed his eyes curiously on Mr. Sydney—hesitated again—opened his mouth to speak—and then said, "Good morning."

But whether Mr. Langston would give up "the living" was not yet the question. The question was whether life itself would not be given up, for the day after this conversation he was worse. The Doctor was very grave, but very tender, in his manner, and looked at Edith with much concern in his countenance, and his tone was full of sympathy, as, taking her hand very kindly, he said, "My dear young lady, I will not disguise that your father is really ill; but I assure you I am not without hope. No, certainly not without hope. But the issue is in higher hands than ours, and I trust you know that He doeth all things well."

When the Doctor descended from the sick room, whom should he find in the parlour but Mr. Kierney, who had come to inquire after the patient, and to ask if he could be allowed to see him. Evidently he had received a very decided refusal from Mr. Sydney, and now appealed to the physician for permission, stating he was "one of Mr. Langston's deacons."

"*You see him!*" said Doctor Smith, with an emphasis on the pronoun, and in a tone of voice by no means flattering to the gentleman addressed. "*You see him!* No, Sir; not for the world. His life trembles in the balance, and your presence in the sick chamber would be a heavy weight in the wrong scale. I hear you were the last person who spoke to him before he was seized with those frightful spasms of the heart in the pulpit. No, Sir; you can't see him." And the Doctor turned on his heel.

When he was gone Mr. Sydney said to Mr. Kierney, evidently resuming a conversation which had been interrupted;

"Neither can Mr. Langston be spoken to on the matter, Sir, nor shall Miss Langston be troubled. I hold myself as the nearest friend he has, and am quite prepared to take upon myself all the responsibility of a decision. You may make whatever arrangements for supplying the pulpit you please. If Mr. Lang-

ston ever preaches again, it will be months first ; and then all the effort I can employ shall be exerted to prevent his ever setting foot in that pulpit any more. Of course, I cannot take upon me to send in his formal resignation to the Church. But if he recovers I have no manner of doubt he will feel thoroughly satisfied that the time has arrived for consenting to such a step, and will do what is necessary in the matter. And if he is taken from us, why, you, Sir, will be relieved from the presence of a man who is far too good to be any longer exposed to the tender mercies of a — of a —” [I don't know what epithet he might not have employed, but he restrained himself, and said merely] “—of a Kierney. I wish you good morning, Sir ;” he added, and opened the door for his visitor to depart.

Edith entered the room just as Mr. Sydney had shut it again, and said,

“Martha told me that Mr. Kierney was here.”

“He was, my dear ;” answered Mr. Sydney, in a quick way, looking rather excited and angry. “He was, my dear ; but, it will be long before he darkens the door again, I fancy. It was time some one showed him to himself a little.”

“Oh, Mr. Sydney, what have you done ?” asked she, nervously. “You little know Mr. Kierney, and the mischief he is capable of making out of a word, or a look, even.”

“Never mind him, Edith. Let him go. He shall never trouble your dear father or you any more, I promise you. Make your mind perfectly easy about all that. I see light, though you do not. Edith, can you trust me ?” And he extended his hand to her.

“Can I trust you ? Of course I can ;” she replied as she took the offered hand. But so much crowded into her memory as she spoke that she burst into tears ;—

“Oh, Mr. Sydney ! What does Doctor Smith really think ? Can he save him ! Is he dying ? Oh, do not let me deceive myself.”

“‘Dying,’ Edith ! Oh, no, no. Far from that, I quite believe. And as soon as ever he gets a little better, ever so little able to bear a reference to the state of things, I think I can set his mind at rest, and do him as much good as Doctor Smith. I do really believe the merciful Father will spare him to us all for many years yet. And as soon as ever Doctor Smith gets him a little over the symptoms of to-day, Doctor Sydney shall try what *he* can do. Only, if I make him well again, you know — Edith —”

“Oh, if you can !” she exclaimed eagerly, her face brightening at the idea of his recovery ; “Oh, if you can !” she repeated.

And the confidence that Mr. Sydney appeared to have, and

the hopeful tone in which he spoke, and the strength which seemed to diffuse itself from him, and the tender sympathy and brotherliness she felt she could lean on, lightened her heart somewhat of its heavy load ; and she returned to her post in the sick chamber with a composure that was not wholly assumed, and as she kissed her father's brow, it was with the feeling that she could trust her heavenly Father for everything. And the languid eye of the sick man brightened at the sight and touch of his child ; and a loving smile faintly diffused itself over the pale face, and, as she bent over him, he said in a whisper that was but just audible, and with many pauses, " Edith, my love, all's well. I've just had a few moments' sleep, and I seem to see God's will making itself quite plain. Let us trust, and not be afraid. Living or dying we are the Lord's." The effort exhausted him. She laid her finger on his dear lips,—gave him one of her loving smiles, kissed him once more—then stole softly to her chair, and was still, that he might rest.

(To be continued.)

ON THE CONDUCT OF CHRIST TOWARDS JUDAS ISCARIOT.

THE deep remorse that subsequently fell on Judas has led to the suggestion of a way of interpreting our Lord's betrayal which takes away some of its infamy. This theory is that the betrayer was ever expecting a crisis when, things having come to the worst with our Lord, and his enemies being on the point, apparently, of a complete triumph, he would suddenly display his super-human power and assume his position of royalty, and that Judas wished and expected to hasten this crisis by betraying him. It seems sufficient, to refute this idea, to remark that the arrangement was made to betray Jesus *for money*, especially connecting this with the fact that Judas usually comes before us, in the references made to him, as a man whose characteristic sin was covetousness.

The whole conduct of Christ then towards his betrayer becomes a subject of deep interest and importance. With what design and in what spirit did our Lord admit this man into

association with himself, and prolong the connection, and suffer it to be as close and intimate, externally at least, as that enjoyed by the other disciples?

The moral lessons afforded by the history of the traitor are familiar and impressive. They have rung for ages in the ears of Christian congregations. We do not deny their importance, but they are not so important as a right understanding of the spirit and feeling of Jesus towards him; the purpose that prolonged and regulated their association. To attain a view of Christ's attitude towards Judas, in which it shall appear worthy of a true God and a loving Saviour, is far more desirable than to make an analysis of the motives and character of the betrayer, or to present vividly the moral lesson of his history.

It is held by some theologians that Christ regarded his betrayer from the beginning as a man whose doom was fixed, and who was to be taken into the band of disciples as the sure way by which he might work out his destiny and come to his perdition. One distinguished commentator, accounting for the bag having been committed to Judas' charge, says:—"It is part of the adorable ways of Providence in regard to sin that sinners are placed in circumstances in which their sin must break out;"* and another adds, "Jesus let Judas have the bag, not although he was—but because he was a covetous man. It was part of his doom that the bag was committed to his hands. Criminal records present in relation to this the most manifold analogies. Most transgressors become such by opportunity presented to them. That which slumbers within them is often aroused by remarkable concatenations of events pointing plainly to the finger of God's Providence. To keep them back from such temptations would not make them better; it would only hinder their sin from reaching maturity and shewing its full fruits, which is the condition of thorough reformation, if this be still possible, and the foundation of judgment if not."†

We may well pause before such a statement of the secret intentions of Providence in the ordering of a man's course, such a representation of the heart lying at the centre of and regulating the power that directs our path through life. If we look for something earthly that shall have an analogy with such providential government it would be this—a father finding one of his children more disposed than the rest to evil surrounds that child with special inducements to evil; discovering a predisposition to some particular vice he adapts the temptation and provides the opportunity for its indulgence. This is not fatherly wisdom and love on earth, at least, and we have little sympathy

* Lampe.

† Hengstenberg.

with the heart that can assert it of the heavenly Father. Does any man seek to help the development of sin in his child, to hasten on its maturity and its fruit, as the way to the child's reformation, or, failing that, to ensure good ground for its condemnation? Is it not the case that either good or evil in the human heart grows stronger by being roused into activity, and that the prolonged undisturbed slumber of either is its surest way to extinction? The principle we follow with those whose moral life we are concerned about is to avoid everything that will quicken into activity their bad qualities; to let these die through not being appealed to, and on the other hand to strengthen the springs of generosity, holiness, and truth in them by keeping them in perpetual life and action. To say then that Providence places a man in a certain position designedly for the stimulating of his besetting sin, is to charge God with aiming to increase the depth and permanence of that man's wickedness—not merely with permitting the self-chosen path to perdition to be trodden, but with adding force to the man's inward bias towards that path.

But the divinity of Christ, we are told, is imperilled unless we admit that the whole of Judas' history within and without, the progress of his wickedness and his doom, were regarded by his master, from the beginning, as definitely and irreversibly fixed. He was called into the circle of disciples that he might do that deed and come to that doom—for the sake of the arrangement that there should be a traitor amongst them! All which proceeded from our Lord's lips for the purpose of warning, of remonstrance, of appeal to the conscience and heart of his betrayer, was not really such, but only that Judas might fill up the measure of his iniquity! The bag was put into his keeping that he might not want the opportunity of being a thief! Christ's divinity demands the admission of all this!

The writer last quoted when commenting on the Lord's words at the Last Supper:—"That the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me has lifted up his heel against me," is careful to remark that the first part of the verse as it stands in the psalm is omitted, "My familiar friend in whom I trusted;" explaining the omission on the ground that Christ as divine could not ever have trusted Judas, and therefore could not bring these words into his quotation. "Jesus," he says, "chose Judas that he might betray him, and that thus the scripture might be fulfilled, according to which such a man belonged to the necessary surrounding of the Redeemer. Had our Lord not chosen Judas, the nature of the world, as it has been exhibited in the scripture quoted, would have been imperfectly represented in the Apostolic circle; and this again would have been an un-

faithful type of the Church in its later development. Judas belongs to the Apostolical circle no less than Peter and John. We should miss something essential if there had been no Judas among the Apostles." Thus to some men's eyes our Lord never appears out of a dramatic attitude, nor any incident of his life free from histrionic design.

He would be bold who should venture to define our Lord's acquaintance with the future circumstances of his own life on earth. He surely is on very unsafe ground who first lays down dogmatically the nature and measure of insight into future events required by one who is both God and man, and then proceeds to demonstrate from the Gospels that Christ's fore-knowledge tallies with his theory. But this we unhesitatingly say, that they deny Christ's divinity who give an interpretation to his conduct that makes it inconsistent with perfect holiness and love; and that such treatment of a moral being as we have just now supposed, and which is manifestly implied by the writers quoted, would be *wicked from whomsoever it proceeded*.

The divinity of Christ demands that we believe him to have sought to the very last, in all sincerity and not without hope, to restrain Judas from the deep wickedness of the actual betrayal. Down to the very brink of ruin the Master strove to save his disciple, and an honest striving to save a man implies that, in the mind of him who would be the deliverer, hope is not yet utterly extinguished. Christ washed the feet of Judas along with the rest, appealing by that deed to his better nature. While doing so, he solemnly asserted his knowledge of a secret wickedness working in the soul of one of them—"Ye are clean but not all"—that the warning, more touching for its indirectness, might reach the conscience that had the dark stain upon it. Then, with more explicitness as to the nature of the hidden wickedness:—"He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me." Afterwards with more perfect plainness, "He was troubled in spirit and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you that one of you will betray me." Then, finally, "When he had dipped the sop he gave it to Judas Iscariot." This was the last appeal, a silent but strong one, against the treachery working in Judas' mind.

But, it may be urged, is not the warning arising from the traitor's example sufficient to justify Providence in stimulating and developing the infamy of his character? We could hardly have known how impenetrable the moral darkness of a soul may be, but for this instance of one in long and close association with him whose whole life breathed perfect divine love, whose single word could give what no fortune could buy—a quiet sea to those perishing in the storm, food for the thousands in the

wilderness, health to such as "had spent all their living upon physicians and were nothing bettered but rather grown worse,"—the result of that association being that the disciple sells his Master for thirty pieces of silver. It is a lesson of no little force, and no narrow application in these days, that we have in Judas' eagerness to get rid of the profit he had made by such hard fighting against his conscience; his coming back with the money to the priests and elders and flinging it down in the Temple when they meet him with mockery and will not touch the detestable thing for their own purposes. Money itself going begging! No man willing to take it and relieve its owner, who finds "the rust of it eating his flesh as it were fire." We admit the force and solemnity of the warning here; but that is different from admitting that his Master helped him to become what he was, brought inducements to bear, and gave him opportunity of becoming such for the sake of that warning. God could not make a victim of a human soul for the sake of making an example; could not, we believe, make *one man* wicked, or lead him a single step deeper into wickedness, to save *the whole race* from becoming wicked of their own accord.

Besides;—what is the essential power and actual effect of an example of evil? Even though it may plainly illustrate the retribution that follows sin, its natural and certain influence is, not to deter men, but to draw them into sin. A morally corrupt character can only be a source of corruption whether we meet with him in life or in history. His punishment may be a partial, a very partial, antidote to the poison he diffuses, but still it is ever poison that flows from him. Christ sought to save Judas, not merely in mercy to the wretched man himself, but because he foresaw fruits of corruption and death ever springing up anew in the world from such an example of treachery. The divine method of turning men from evil is by lifting up before them, upon the Cross, the embodiment of perfect holiness and love, rather than by creating vivid and terrible illustrations of sin.

NOTES ON INSPIRATION.

III.—WHAT INSPIRATION DO THE HOLY SCRIPTURES CLAIM?

THERE can be very little doubt that many of the common conceptions of the Inspired Scriptures are very remote from those

of inspired men. These WRITINGS are commonly held to be infallibly accurate in their letter, and quite indispensable to the Christian Faith. It is hardly going too far to say that a large majority of good men believe that every inspired word ever uttered has been recorded for our instruction; that it is wicked to try the Inspired Books by the ordinary tests; and that if these books should be lost the faith of Christendom would be imperilled, if not utterly destroyed. It is these popular beliefs about the sacred Scriptures which lend such amazing vitality to those demonstrably false or inadequate theories of Inspiration which are still in vogue among us. Yet no one of these beliefs will bear examination: so soon as we consider, we are compelled to renounce, them.

So far from it being true that every inspired word has been put on record, it is obviously, notoriously untrue. The Old Testament Scriptures tell us of many prophets who spake by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost none of whose words have come down to us, and of others only a few of whose prophecies have been gathered up. The New Testament Scriptures tell us of many who were moved to write narratives of the things most surely believed in the Church—narratives which have long since been lost. Nay, we know that the Apostles were all inspired; they all went forth preaching the Gospel of Christ; they were all filled with the Holy Ghost: yet where are the Gospels according to Andrew, Philip, and Bartholomew, James, the son of Zebedee, and Simon the Canaanite, Matthias and Lebbaeus?

So far from it being wicked to try the accuracy of the Inspired Writings by the ordinary tests, and to point out, if we discover them, mistakes, discrepancies, and even immoralities of thought; we are encouraged thus to dig in the rich mine of Scripture, and to separate the ore from the refuse, by the very highest examples. Inspired Luke wrote his Gospel mainly because the inspired "versions" current in his day were inaccurate and incomplete; because, while they contained "the very certainty"—that which could not be shaken—they also contained that which could be shaken, and which it was very necessary to shake. And our Lord Himself in whom dwelt all the fulness of God, criticized and condemned the utterances of "them of old time," opposing His authority to at least some of the enactments of the Mosaic law.

So far from it being true that the Christian Faith could not maintain its hold if the Inspired Writings were withdrawn from the hands of the people, it is only of late years that they have been at all commonly in the people's hands. No one of our canonical Gospels was written till twenty years after the Ascension of Christ; it was two hundred years after His Ascension

before the several books were gathered into one and the New Testament was formed. Even then the Scriptures were in manuscript, and could only be purchased by the rich : a copy of one of the Gospels or Epistles was a treasure to be handed from father to son, or kept among the most sacred possessions of a Church. From that time to the time of Luther, the Scriptures were chained to the desk of the pulpit or to the library shelves ; only the clergy could read them, and not even the bulk of the clergy. Even after the invention of printing and the Reformation and the translation of the Scriptures into modern languages, the great mass of the people were shrouded in an ignorance so dense, that, save among the small Nonconformist communities, they learned almost all they knew of the Bible from the lips of the priest. It is only within the last hundred years—one might almost say only within the memory of middle-aged men—that copies of the Bible have become so cheap and a certain degree of education so widely diffused as that, at least in England, the people have read in their own tongue the wonderful words of God. And even now, among all other than the Anglo-Saxon nations, or nearly all, the laity are forbidden to read the Bible ; they know only so much of it as they gather from the services of the Church. In short, nothing can seem more absurd to a student of Church history, than the assertion, that the Gospel, or the Church of Christ, is altogether dependent on a book, even though that book be one so precious as the New Testament. For, during all these past ages of the Christian era, the truth as it is in Jesus has found its way to millions on millions of hearts, despite the ignorance of the clergy and the corruptions of the Church ; the living testimony has passed from mouth to mouth, from generation to generation ; an unbroken chain of witnesses, true “successors of the Apostles” these, have kept alive the glorious tradition and communicated the vital influence. And even if the Bible were miraculously withdrawn from our hands to-morrow, the Church would still live to bear witness to Christ in every service, by every sacrament ; and all this great Christendom around us would testify to the redeeming facts of His Life, His Death, and His Resurrection from the Dead.

So saying, do we in any wise disparage the Bible ? Nay, rather, but we magnify the power and grace of God, and of that Revelation of Himself which He has made through Jesus Christ His Son. That Revelation would live and work its redeeming wonders even though the Holy Scriptures had never been written, even though they were no longer preserved. And as if conscious of its inherent power, the Lord Jesus took no pains to secure that it should be recorded in written words.

He gathered around Him, not scribes and learned men who might have wrought the record of His life into the most effective and artistic forms, but simple and unlettered men to whose strong hands the stylus was not native. When He sent them forth and filled them with His Spirit, it was that they might "*preach* the Gospel to every creature," not that they should write a Gospel which every creature might read. And when they began to write, no special pains were taken to preserve their scriptures. Many Gospels, or versions of the Gospel, many letters written by the Apostles, were suffered to perish. The Scriptures of the New Testament are, so to speak, an added and accidental boon, though a boon the value of which we cannot overrate unless we sink into mere Bibliolatry and worship the letter instead of the spirit of the Word, or unless we make the Gospel of Christ dependent on the books which describe His advent and work. His advent, His appearing took place, even though no scripture had described it. Christ is more than any book, more than any book can reveal, even though it were a thousand times inspired; and the faith by which we are saved is the faith which cleaves to Him, and not to any or all the words by which we have come to know Him.

These remarks, as they tend to weaken the hold of those popular conceptions which are the strength of false inadequate theories of Inspiration, may prepare us to receive a truer, more adequate theory—a theory which shall cover and explain all the Biblical facts noted in our last chapter. These facts, in brief recapitulation, stand thus:—The Inspired Word affirms the general inspiration of universal man; it is "the inspiration of the Almighty" which gives him understanding. They affirm the special inspiration of artists such as Bezaleel, who was filled with the Holy Ghost that he might devise curious works in gold, and in silver, and in bronze; that he might plan buildings, cut gems, chase flagons, and invent dresses of state. They affirm the inspiration of all Christian men—that they are inhabited of God, temples sanctified by the indwelling of His Spirit. They affirm the peculiar inspiration of the wise holy men who were moved by the Holy Ghost to write sacred scriptures. Yet, while strongly affirming these four modes of Inspiration, the Oracles of God do not affirm that any one of them carried infallibility with it. The inspiration which gives men understanding does not make their understanding infallible; its decisions are often inaccurate, false, inconsistent with the facts from which they are drawn. The inspiration of genius is not infallible; it admits of errors, and faults, and progress from less to more. The inspiration of the Christian is not infallible; for he, too, makes mistakes, and falls into divers sins; he grieves

and resists the Holy Spirit by whom he is taught and sanctified. The inspiration of the Sacred Writers is not infallible; for there are discrepancies in the Gospels which no honest ingenuity can reconcile; Stephen, full of the Holy Ghost, falls into clear historical blunders; inspired Paul withstands inspired Peter to his face and charges him with "hypocrisy."

Now any theory of Inspiration worth holding must cover and explain all these facts, and many more. Where shall we find such a theory, or how express it? Obviously, it cannot be packed into any neat portable formula which we can conceive without effort and use without thought. It must be tentative, cumulative, and very broad. When we have reached it, we must not regard it as final and exclusive, or hold it as a dogma with which we may conveniently brain all who differ from us. We must be willing to listen to other interpretations of the facts, and to receive any more light that may break out upon us from God's Holy Word. But, if we search for it and hold it in this catholic temper, it will, so far as I have been able to arrive at it, take the following forms:—

1. We shall begin by admitting that the Spirit of God does strive with man upon the earth, *i. e.*, with every man; that He speaks within him, breathes an atmosphere of heaven round about him which he may inspire if he will, and which even the worst men do at times inspire. We shall confess that all wise thoughts, all holy counsels proceed from the Spirit of God, and, therefore, we shall claim for Him whatever wise thoughts or holy counsels we find in any man's life, or speech, or work, even though he be an infidel or a blasphemer; nay, the worse the man is the more sure we shall be that whatever wisdom or goodness there is in him comes from above, from the pure Fountain of goodness and wisdom, and not from the turbid and polluted depths of his own nature. Believing and confessing this, it will no longer seem strange to us that Holy Scripture should affirm of every man "the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding;" it will no longer perplex us to find that, this heavenly treasure being poured into earthen vessels, the human understanding, though a divine inspiration, is not therefore infallible.

2. And now, suppose any man to have special natural gifts of understanding and to welcome the influence of the All-Wise Spirit, to foster and act on it, so that he becomes very cunning in all manner of artistic workmanship, and can cut gems and grave metals, or paint pictures, or plan great stately buildings, or sing sweet songs, or shoot arrows of conviction from the golden bow of eloquence. If we really believe God to be the source of all light and beauty and wisdom, it will not surprise

us to hear that *this* is called an inspiration of God; that the artist, in so far as the purposes of his art are concerned, is moved and filled by the Spirit of God in all wisdom and knowledge and understanding. We shall only carp and strain at such words if we forget that all wisdom and all skill are of God, and attribute whatever is good and beautiful in man to the creature rather than the Creator. The very artist may not recognize the inspiration which fills and guides him; but we, if we believe in God, are bound to recognize it, and to refer all the truth and charm of painting and music and architecture to the God who "built all things," who has "given sounds even to things without life," and who has filled all heaven and earth with symmetrical forms and rich harmonious hues. The artist may make mistakes, may learn from experience, may pass through many styles, may rise from less to more; but all that is faulty and imperfect in his work is to be attributed to the fact that the inspiration of God has to express itself through the imperfect faculties of man, must be limited by the limitations of his nature, may be thwarted by his sins of will and taints of blood. The artist is inspired, for the breath of God is in him; but he is not infallible, for the Divine Breath has to pass through human organs and is restrained, sometimes vitiated, by the organs through which it flows.

3. But the Spirit of God is perfectly holy, as well as perfectly wise; and among His "diversities of operations" there may be an inspiration in which His holiness is prominent rather than His wisdom. In the artist His wisdom is conspicuous; in the Christian His holiness—though in neither case is the one attribute wholly divorced from the other. The Sacred Scriptures expressly assert, in many forms, that all who believe in Christ have His Spirit, the Spirit of Glory and of God; but it is always mainly as a sanctifying Spirit. They are His temples; He dwells in them, as He dwelt in the sacred Hebrew fane, to hallow all the courts of their being, all the songs and sacrifices of their obedience, to shed light on the Word as they read, to lend force to their supplications as they pray. And this is a very great and special inspiration of the Almighty, though this again carries no infallibility with it. The heavenly treasure is still in earthen vessels; and these vessels may not be very capacious or transparent, are not without many flaws and soils. The excellency of the power is of God; but that the excellence of His power is in much restrained and concealed by our folly and impotence needs no proof other than the daily proof of our defective obedience. The Christian is inspired, for he is carried by the Spirit of God toward holiness; but he is not infallible, for he is often carried away by his own lusts.

4. And now, suppose a man to have been the subject of *all* these divers operations of the Spirit. The inspiration of the Almighty has given him understanding ; he has large natural faculties and gifts ; the Wise Spirit of God has made him wise ; the Holy Spirit of God has made him holy. And to him, thus variously prepared, there comes an inward prompting to narrate past dealings of God with the race, some documentary records of which lie at his hand ; or he is moved to recount the present aspects of Providence in which he himself has a part to play ; or a voice speaks to him words big with fate—a voice which he recognizes as the voice of God ; or dim visions, crowded with complex symbols, float before his eye ; or he dreams a dream that interprets those very problems of life which, before he slept, had perplexed his thoughts : and he is impelled to put as much of all this into written words as words will express. Is not such an one in very deed a holy man moved by the Holy Ghost ? Is not his scripture inspired of God with a very special and sacred inspiration, and likely to be profitable for instruction and reproof ? Yet, though inspired, he may not be infallible, nor his words. The Spirit may depart, leaving him half dead ; and in the languors into which spiritual excitement reacts he may become the easy prey of evil. The whole truth—truth in its absolute forms—may not be placed before him, either because he could not grasp those forms, or could not express them if they were placed before him ; or his faculties, though large and trained, may not be able to express even so much as he is permitted to see. For the same symbols presented to different minds strike them differently ; the same word, because it quickens different associations, means one thing on my tongue and quite another on yours, one thing in your ear and quite another in mine. And, therefore, Moses may see the divine law of retaliation clearly enough, and say, “An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth,” while the Prophet like unto Moses may also see a higher law, and say, “Resist not evil, but overcome evil with good.” David may curse the enemies whom Jesus blessed and bids us bless. The Priests, moved to write the Book of Chronicles, may give a narrow ecclesiastical view of the very events of which the Prophets, moved to write the Book of Kings, give a broad human view. The Historians, when urged to write their Scriptures, may have been content to weave into their work ancient documents commonly held to be authentic and accurate, and in these there may have been errors which they had no means of correcting. The Prophets may have seen visions and heard voices which revealed only partial views of truth afterwards to be enlarged, or views so large that they were only partially able to express them. All this was inevitable

unless men, instead of being inspired, were to be annihilated by the Holy Ghost, to lose all freedom and individuality, and to sink into mere mechanical automata; or, unless the gradual education of the human race—which is God's plan—were to be exchanged for a dead level of knowledge, or rather of ignorance—which would perhaps have been man's plan. And therefore we need not be staggered or made doubtful in our minds when we find some predictions recalled as soon as uttered; when, for instance, we find Prophet Nathan first encouraging David to build a house for God, and then forbidding him to build it; or when we hear Prophet Isaiah say to sick Hezekiah, "Thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt die, and not live," and yet immediately afterwards promising him that he shall live, and not die; or when the Lord Jesus corrects with His larger wisdom the imperfect utterances of them of old time. Take the old theological theory of infallible Inspiration, and every such fact has to be dishonestly explained away simply because it cannot be ingeniously explained; but take the theory founded on Biblical facts—the inspiration of fallible men—and all the discoveries of criticism, hostile or friendly, may leave you as honest as the day and yet with your faith in no wise shaken.

5. But is this *all* we can say for the Inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures? It is very far from all that we can say, at least for the inspiration of those New Testament Scriptures which are the main haunt and region of our faith. For here we must take new facts into the account. We must recall that helpful distinction between the Gospel and the Gospels which was drawn in our first chapter. *The Gospel* is the good news of salvation brought by the Lord Jesus Christ—the truth expressed in His Life and Speech, His Death, Resurrection, and Ascension into heaven. *The Gospels* are only those partial accounts of this Perfect Life which holy men were moved to write—accounts which extend over only three years of a life of three and thirty years, and of those three years give us only detached glimpses and utterances. For the Gospel that came with Christ—the Gospel of His life and word—we claim an absolute infallible inspiration. "God gave not the Spirit *by measure* to Him." In Him we find the sole Son of Man, who could accurately and perfectly declare and glorify the Father. He was the Immanuel—the God with us—the one only infallible Teacher, infallible as well as inspired. In Him the inspirations of the Divine Spirit were thwarted by no lurking infirmity, no secret or open defect. But we dare not put the Evangelists on the same level with Him. They had the Spirit, but it was in their several measures, according to their several ability, not without measure or limit. They do not claim, they do not show, His infallibility. The Spirit which

speaks through them all, speaks according to the idiosyncrasy of each. Each of them fastens on that feature of the one Gospel of Christ most congenial to his make and habit of thought—Matthew on its fulfilments of Hebrew prophecy, and Luke on His grace to sinners of the Gentiles; John on His love and the simple yet profound philosophy of His teaching, and Paul on the argumentative phases of the truth and its catholic all-embracing scope. You see Christ and His Gospel through their eyes as you read their Scriptures, and must look through all their eyes before you begin to see Him as He was; but you will get all the clearer conception of Him by thus seeing Him through different and characteristic media. They are fallible and partial witnesses; no one of them gives, or could give, us *all* that was in Christ. They are not careful in the matter of dates. They are not of a critical turn, and work up any documents, pedigrees, versions which suit their purpose and which they hold to be authentic. Matthew takes the genealogy of Joseph from one source, and Luke from another; Peter quotes Paul, and gently complains of the many passages in his brother's Epistles which to his simplicity were hard to be understood; Luke reads and compares, corrects and supplements, the versions of the Life of Christ current in his day, traces all things to their source, and essays to set them forth in a more consecutive and orderly way; the Apostle of the Gentiles scatters letters through the Churches addressed to their passing needs, and takes no pains to preserve them—some of them are irrevocably lost. As we look into the glass of the Word, we catch glimpses of a whole world of busy stirring life; but all its denizens are speakers and workers, hardly any of them scribes. They preach and dispute; they do not write. Inspiration is a common, if not an universal, gift, taking many forms according to their several capacity. Some work miracles, some prophesy, some discern spirits, some speak with divers tongues, some interpret, some heal the sick. All these charisms, or gifts, are the work of that "One and the Self-same Spirit" who reveals Himself through "diversities of gifts and ministries and operations." No stress is laid upon one above another; all are to be desired; and that which is better than all, and greater than all, is the divine charity without which all else is but as sonorous brass or a clanging cymbal.

6. This is the general view we get of the New Testament Inspiration from the New Testament itself; but, amid all this torrent and diversity of gifts, we find that the Apostles speak with a certain superior and admitted authority. No man defers to them, they do not defer to each other, *as infallible*; but they are deferred to as men who speak and write with authority—an

authority mainly derived from the fact that they have seen the Lord, that they have listened to the only infallible Teacher and Guide. They excel all other members of the Church in gifts; but, above all, they have "compained" with Christ. No superstitious reverence is attached to their words; the words of half of them have not been preserved, nor a tithe of the words of the other half. Nevertheless, all the Churches are eager to hear and to compare their testimony. So distinctly was the line drawn in early days between the Gospel in the Life of Christ and the Gospels spoken or written by the Apostles, that St. Paul's authority was often questioned, until he proved that he also had seen the Lord and had received his Gospel from Him, not from man; and even after that his authority was not regarded as final and conclusive. Even of his own converts many preferred the Gospel according to Cephas, or Apollos, or the Brethren of the Lord. Yet, despite all these differences of thought and view, of character and aim, I think we may very safely claim for the writers of the New Testament an inspiration peculiar to themselves—an inspiration which distinguishes their scriptures from all other writings and raises them above all. For not only did the inspiration of the Almighty give them understanding; not only did the Wise Spirit make them wise, and the Holy Spirit make them holy. In addition to all this, we claim for them two special advantages which none that were before them could enjoy, nor any that came after them. We claim for them that they had seen Christ as no others have seen Him, had walked with Him and lived with Him; that for three years they stood face to face with that Perfect Life through which the Perfect Gospel was revealed, and listened to the one Teacher whose inspiration was unlimited, perfect, infallible. And we claim for them, not only that they lived in an age in which the gifts of the Holy Ghost were bestowed with a profusion and in a force unknown to any previous or subsequent age, but that they themselves received, as the Church of that age confessed, the gifts of the Spirit in a measure which even then was exceptional and unique. They were not infallible whether in word or conduct; but their inspiration excels that of other men in that very proportion in which their miracles surpass the common "works" of the Church, and the fire of their devotion burns with a sacred fervour compared with which our devotion pales and well-nigh expires.

Less than this we dare not claim for them; and why should we claim more? Is not this enough? Cannot we see Christ as plainly through their scriptures as Theophilus could see Christ in the "versions" in which he was catechized? And so that we see *Him*, and believe on Him, does it greatly matter that St. Matthew gives the genealogy of Joseph inaccurately, or that St.

Stephen quotes from a foreign and imperfect translation of the Hebrew Scriptures? Is it not well that we, who are to be "men in understanding, and not babes," still less *babies*, should be compelled to exercise our understanding on the very Scriptures themselves? Is it not well that we, who are of so indolent a habit, should be constrained to think? that we, who are of so idolatrous a habit should be obliged to renounce the mere "letter" of Scripture which kills, for "the spirit" of Scripture which gives life?

Do any reply, "It may be well; but none the less we should like to have an infallible Book as well as an infallible Christ." Ah, but where can you get one? and of what use would it be to you even though you had it? Our copies of Scripture are modern translations of comparatively modern manuscripts. The *ipsissima verba* of Inspiration are lost beyond recall. No manuscript, whether of the Old or New Testament, written by the hand of its author is anywhere to be had. The copies that have come down to us are crowded with various readings, which, however minute, prove conclusively that we do not possess, and cannot recover, the exact words and letters which holy men were moved to write. And even if we could recover them, even though an infallible book were in our hands, of what use would it be without an infallible interpreter? The same words suggest many meanings to many minds. Such words as Repentance, Faith, Election, Charity, Redemption, are interpreted in an endless variety of senses, and many a man has died rather than admit that one of these words was capable of any other or wider sense than that he had put upon it. An infallible book has for its natural sequel, its logical conclusion, an infallible Pope. Would you be content to place yourself in his hands, and refer all your doubts and questions to his unerring sagacity? Englishmen have but one answer to that question—an answer which they are wont to deliver in a sufficiently emphatic and indignant tone. There is but one way in which their craving for infallibility can be met. It is this: Let men read the Holy Scriptures in their quickening spirit and not after the benumbing letter; let them listen to the voice of that Holy Ghost who still speaks within every faithful heart; and the Infallible Scripture and the Infallible Interpreter will both be theirs.

LENNARD.

A PRETTY GOOD DAY'S WORK.

REFERENCE was made the other day in a pleasant ministerial circle to an amusing and characteristic letter of the once well known Robert Robinson's, of Cambridge, but no one present knew the letter, or even seemed to know much of the man. Perhaps, therefore, it may not be unacceptable to the readers of the CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR to have the letter referred to presented to them, and with a word or two of preface; for we not seldom find men whose names in our youth were as familiar as household words now altogether unknown.

Robert Robinson was Robert Hall's immediate predecessor as pastor of the Baptist Church at Cambridge, and was so much admired by that afterwards famous pulpit orator that he said "he was so fascinated with his manner that he resolved to imitate it," although, happily for himself and others, he soon ceased to be an imitator. But Hall himself subsequently said about him:—"Sir, if I had not been a foolish young man, I should have seen how ridiculous it was to imitate such a preacher as Mr. Robinson. He had a musical voice, and was master of its intonations, and could say *what* he pleased, *when* he pleased, and *how* he pleased." He was a man of considerable talent, great mental energy and untiring industry, and with indefatigable labour, that was to him, however, but pleasant exercise, became a man of learning, and was considerably regarded, and not unfrequently conferred with, by men of high position in the University and elsewhere. It was not, however, so much in classical scholarship that his fame was acquired, as in paths more immediately connected with his own primary relations as a religious teacher. Fearless and free in his inquiries, he soon excited the suspicions of the more zealously orthodox of his own denomination. And to a great extent their possibly premature suspicions, and their often unwise, as well as unkind and unworthy, methods of protecting beliefs they held sacred by exciting prejudice against him, were allowed unduly and unhappily to influence his mind by exasperating it against the men and everything they held. From being a defender of the Divinity of our Lord he became a zealous opponent of "orthodoxy" on the right hand and on the left, and seems to have thought almost all weapons fair as against such opponents. Not only was he robust and skilful in argument, but he was a master of sarcasm, and unhappily did not restrain his propensity to treat even sacred themes, when handled by men he despised, with a jocularity that sometimes

not only bordered on the irreverent, but even became at times almost profane. And yet he oftentimes expresses himself with a reverent tenderness about Christ Jesus his Lord which is very touching, and loved to set forth His claims to men's profoundest faith and loyalty. But strong man as he was, and acute as well as vigorous, and broad and genial in his sympathies, his latter end can scarcely be said to be better than his beginning. It is not safe for the searcher after highest truth to allow himself to despise any class of his fellow Christians. The prejudice he so clearly sees in them, in favour of some particular tenet, may beget in him a contrary prejudice, which may cause him to swerve as much in one direction as they in another. For the opposite to error is not necessarily truth. And a still more fatal hindrance in the way of a successful pursuit of truth is the habit of joking on sacred themes.

The reaction in Robinson's mind against the often crude, and sometimes offensive, and not unfrequently revolting forms in which the orthodox belief was put, was *a priori* quite likely to lead him to miss or give up even the truth which was so unfortunately presented. Most heresies are reactions against other heresies; only often the more injurious designation gets applied only to the one class, while the other, being for the time in the ascendant, takes to itself the more gratifying appellation of orthodox. But those who can look back through the past thirty or forty years of the history of opinion in our Nonconformist Churches will scarcely need to be reminded how impossible it was for a man in Robinson's time (which was much earlier, he dying in 1790) to meet with any sympathy in the Churches of the Baptist body whenever the leaders began to intimate that there was reason to suspect him of "unsoundness in the faith." The writer of these lines remembers when "the venerable"—as he is now termed—James Howard Hinton was regarded pretty widely in his own denomination as a man of unsound and unsafe opinions. And the writer's father was present at a meeting of ministers in which Andrew Fuller had "the cold shoulder" given him by all of them; while, on one occasion, Abraham Booth refused to take Fuller's offered hand because he was an enemy to the truth. Had Robert Robinson lived in the present day he would have been spared the action of some of those agencies or influences which, we think, helped to drive him unconsciously somewhat farther than perhaps he would have gone had he wisely been proof against them. But he was to a large extent a noble-minded man, and it is next to impossible to read his works without both respecting and loving him. For ourselves, we find that, without design, we instinctively mention his name in a tone of voice which indicates not only admiration, but a

tenderness that melts almost into pity. He would have found a home amongst us now, without being driven by the bitterness and spite he often experienced to seek for sympathy exclusively among Unitarians. But there is no doubt that he was one of those hearty pioneers who have helped to clear the way for that greater freedom of opinion which obtains now, and from which ultimately truth must be the gainer.

Scholar as Robinson was, and the frequent associate and correspondent of men of eminence in the University, he for many years gave no small portion of his time to agricultural pursuits, still retaining his pastorate of the Cambridge church. He bought two farms, which together amounted to some hundred and sixty acres; he kept a ferry, and dealt also in coals and corn. He had small respect for the merely professional. He felt himself strong enough not to be obliged to owe anything to it. He could stand by himself, without tacitly claiming anything from his official character. And any man whom he thought capable of teaching his people might wear any dress, blue coat if he pleased, with metal buttons—then a common dress for a gentleman, for the now universal black was for the most part confined to the clergy and to mourners.

A successor of Robinson's in the pulpit once occupied by Robert Hall, published, a few years since, a biography of him, which we are sorry to learn is out of print. Else, from what we know of the author, though it is our misfortune not to have seen the book, we should have been gratified to refer the reader to it, sure that justice would have been done to the noble qualities of the man, while his failings would have been discriminatingly and tenderly dealt with.

The highly-characteristic letter, for the sake of introducing which it has been judged desirable to offer these explanatory observations, is as follows:—

“Chesterton, May 26, 1784.

“Old Friend,

“You love I should write folios: that depends upon circumstances, and if the thunder-storm lasts, it will be so: but what a sad thing it is to be forced to write, when one has nothing to say! Well, you shall have an apology for not writing,—that is, a diary of one day.

“Rose at three o'clock—crawled into the library—and met one who said, ‘Yet a little while is the light with you: walk while ye have the light—the night cometh, when no man can work—my Father worketh hitherto, and I work.’—Rang the great bell, and roused the girls to milking—went up to the farm, roused the horse-keeper—fed the horses, while he was getting up

—called the boy to suckle the calves, and clean out the cow-house—lighted the pipe, walked round the gardens to see what was wanting there—went up the paddock to see if the weanling calves were well—went down to the ferry, to see whether the boy had scooped and cleaned the boats—returned to the farm—examined the shoulders, heels, traces, chaff, and corn of eight horses going to plough—mended the acre-staff—cut some thongs, whip-corded the boys' plough whips—pumped the troughs full—saw the hogs fed—examined the swill tubs, and then the cellar—ordered a quarter of malt, for the hogs want grains, and the men want beer—filled the pipe again, returned to the river, and bought a lighter of turf for dairy-fires, and another of sedge for ovens—hunted up the wheelbarrows, and set them a trundling—returned to the farm, called the men to breakfast, and cut the boys' bread and cheese, and saw the wooden bottles filled—sent one plough to the three-roods, another to the three-half-acres, and so on—shut the gates, and the clock struck five—breakfasted—set two men to ditch the five roods—two more to chop sads, and spread about the land—two more to throw up muck in the yard—and three men and six women to weed wheat—set on the carpenter to repair cow-cribs, and set them up till winter—the wheeler to mend up the old carts, cart-ladders, rakes, &c., preparatory to hay-time and harvest—walked to the six-acres, found hogs in the grass—went back, and sent a man to hedge and thorn—sold the butcher a fat calf, and the suckler a lean one—the clock strikes nine—walked into barley-field—barleys fine, picked off a few tiles and stones, and cut a few thistles—the peas fine, but foul; the charlock must be topped—the tares doubtful; the fly seems to have taken them—prayed for rain, but could not see a cloud—came round to the wheat-field—wheats rather thin, but the finest colour in the world—sent four women on to the shortest wheats—ordered one man to weed the ridge of the long wheats—and two women to keep rank and file with him in the furrows—thistles many—blue-bottles no end,—traversed all the wheat-field, came to the fallow-field—the ditchers have run crooked—set them straight—the flag-sads cut too much, rush-sads too little, strength wasted, shew the men how to three-corner them—laid out more work for the ditchers—went to the ploughs—set the foot a little higher, cut a wedge, set the coulter deeper, must go and get a new mould-board against to-morrow—went to the other plough—picked up some wool, and tyed over the traces—mended a horse-tree, tyed a thong to the plough hammer—went to see which lands wanted ploughing first—sat down under a bush—wondered how any man could be so silly as to call me *reverend*—read two verses, and thought of his loving-kindness in the midst of his temple—gave out, 'Come

all harmonious tongues,' and set Mount Ephraim tune—rose up—whistled—the dogs wagged their tails, and on we went—got home—dinner ready—filled the pipe—drank some milk—and fell asleep—woke by the carpenter for some slabs, which the sawyer must cut—the Reverend Messrs. A. in a coat, B. in a gown of black, and C. in one of purple, came to drink tea, and to settle whether Gomer was the father of the Celts and Gauls and Britons, or only the uncle—proof-sheet from Mr. Archdeacon—corrected it—washed—dressed—went to meeting, and preached from 'The end of all things is at hand, be ye sober, and watch unto prayer'—found a dear brother reverence there, who went home with me, and edified us all out of Solomon's song, with a dish of tripe out of Leviticus, and a golden candlestick out of Exodus.—Really and truly we look for you and Mrs. Keene and Mr. Dore at harvest; and if you do not come, I know what you all are.—Let Mr. Winch go where he can better himself. Is not this a folio? And like many other folios?

"R. ROBINSON.

"Henry Keene, Esq."

"LITTLE ENGLAND BEYOND WALES."

AMONG the many peculiarities which attract the attention of the English visitor in Wales is the almost entire disappearance of the Welsh language from some districts. I do not refer to those parts of the Principality which border upon England, for it is easy to understand how the Anglo-Saxon tongue should make rapid inroads among those of the inhabitants of Wales who are the immediate neighbours of English people. There is no difficulty in comprehending how English should prevail in the lower parts of Glamorganshire, and from thence northward through parts of Breconshire, Radnorshire, Montgomery, Denbigh and Flint, to Chester. But how does it come to pass that right away in the interior of Wales tracts of country are found where the people have scarcely any knowledge of the Welsh tongue? After passing through a district, the traveller unexpectedly finds himself in a place where the language of the "Sassenach" almost exclusively prevails. For instance, suppose he were journeying in any direction through Wales toward Brecon, he would hear nothing but Welsh for miles around, but on reaching the town he would hear nothing except English;

or, if he were travelling along the coast, between Cardiff and Neath, he would recognize for most of the way the prevalence of English. Again, in the neighbourhood of Swansea, it would be found that, by the people in the country districts, Welsh is spoken, save on the small promontory, called, "Gower land," where the Celtic language has no dwelling place. Here, again, surrounded on every side by a population purely Welsh in extraction and tongue, are some few hundreds of people who, in language, have no connection with their neighbours. They converse among themselves in as unmixed English as can be heard in any part of the United Kingdom. We may take another and more remarkable instance of the same kind. The whole of the northern portion of Pembrokeshire is inhabited by a Welsh-speaking population. The people there for the most part are entirely unacquainted with English, but in the southern part of the same county the inhabitants have no knowledge of Welsh. If the reader take a map and draw a line from Whitland Station, on the South Wales Railway, through Haverfordwest to St. David's Bay, the English and Welsh-speaking divisions of the county will be marked out for him. To the right of the line so drawn, Welsh rules; to the left, English holds undisputed sway. So exclusive is the use of English in the southern half of Pembrokeshire, that a lady told us that in the course of ten years' residence there, she had not only acquired all her knowledge of English, but had lost her acquaintance with Welsh. The natives of this district are as unable to speak Welsh as are the inhabitants of the most remote English county. I should as much expect to hear a Norfolk man (except Mr. Geo. Borrow) talk Welsh as I should a resident native of South Pembrokeshire. Here are three very remarkable facts—*first*, that this English-speaking colony should be found in such an isolated part of Wales, and so completely surrounded by Welsh; *second*, that the geographical line of separation between the two languages should be so sharp and well defined, that a walk of ten minutes will take one from the midst of the Welsh to the midst of the English; and *third*, that this exclusive use of languages in such circumstances should have been kept up for many centuries without any encroachment on the one side or the other; whilst the Anglo-Saxon tongue has been advancing from the whole line of the English marches further and further into Wales, the Celtic inhabitants of North Pembrokeshire have held their own for seven or eight hundred years against its aggressive tendencies. And, on the other hand, the comparatively small number of English-speaking people in South Pembrokeshire, or, as it is deservedly called, "Little England beyond Wales," though surrounded by Welsh, and, till recently, almost

entirely cut off from intercourse with England, have perfectly preserved the limits within which their language has been spoken for ages. During a recent visit to this western promontory, our attention was called to these facts, and we were led to ask—What is the explanation?—how are we to account for this strange state of things? In order to supply the proper answer we must go far back into the history of this "Little England beyond Wales;" and in doing so we shall find that there are other features than those already referred to, which distinguish the people of South Pembrokeshire from the surrounding Celtic population. The inhabitants of the district are not Welsh, who have learnt English, nor are they descendants of Anglo-Saxons, who possessed themselves of Welsh territory: they are *slightly* of Welsh extraction, having a tinge of Scandinavian blood in their veins. They own *some* relationship to the Anglo-Saxon, but mainly are descendants of the Flemings. They call themselves, and are called by others, Flemings, because the Flemish element predominates, and partly because they have well authenticated traditions current that their forefathers came from Flanders. Any one who has been in South Pembrokeshire, and is acquainted with the features of people's disposition, and can apply the tests whereby races are affiliated, will readily agree with the statement, that the inhabitants are a mixed race, owing their physical and mental characteristics principally to those who, at different times, came over from the Low Countries, and were settled in Western Wales. The land was but sparsely populated by the Welsh, nor were they allowed to hold it peacefully for any length of time. The other parts of the Principality were undisturbed by the hordes of invaders who descended upon the English coast, and swept through the country time after time. South Pembrokeshire, in its low rich unwooded land, and the magnificent harbour of Milford, offered too tempting and easy a prize for the sea rovers to pass it by. And so we find that a greater number of freebooters and foreign emigrants landed and settled in this small district than in any other part of the United Kingdom of equal size. It may be well to adduce some of the facts which throw light upon the growth of the composite population at present found in the locality, which, for seven hundred years has borne the name of "Little England beyond Wales." As the written records respecting this locality are so very scant, we must have recourse in a great measure to other sources, in order to reconstruct its history. We must lay hold on slight threads, disentangle them from other threads with which they have become involved, and then follow each one to its end. And first, we will endeavour to learn something from the names which are found on the map

of South Pembrokeshire. We shall find that each of the tribes which grasped the land has left some evidence of its tenure. We shall acquire knowledge of the doings of such tribes from the names of the hills which they fortified, of the rivers by which they dwelt, of the distant mountains upon which they gazed.* There are existing only a few traces in local names of the original Celtic inhabitants. On the south side of Milford Haven is a place called *Rhoscrowther*; the first syllable, meaning a *moor*, has unquestionably come down from British times; the last syllable has been added from English. On the same side of the Haven is another long, and, to English tongues, unpronounceable name—*Pwllchroghan*. Near Tenby is a village called *Penally*, the Welsh pronunciation of which word has quite died out. There are two places bearing ecclesiastical Celtic designations, as *Eglwslwyd* and *Eglwysfair*. These are nearly all the remains of Welsh names in the whole of the south portion of Pembrokeshire. The small number of such names is in marked contrast with their prevalence in the northern part of the county and the whole of Wales. The limited extent to which the Celts possessed the land, or the completeness of their expulsion, is attested by the fact that nearly every brook, river, mountain and valley, every hamlet, village and town, is stamped with an appellation, which certainly does not come to us either from the language or pre-historic times of the wild Britons, who roamed over the rich plains and mountains, or paddled in their coracles through the waters of their marvellous Haven. We do not meet here in the nomenclature of the soil with the deposit which is found next above the Celtic through nearly the whole of England. The Romans managed during the first three centuries of the Christian era to establish themselves thoroughly east, west, north and south in England. There were very many villages, towns, and large cities scattered over the whole country, which had been built by the Romans, and in which the Roman population, language and customs, alone obtained. But neither Julius Cæsar nor Claudius, neither Agricola nor Adrian, or any of the lesser commanders in the Roman army ever found their way to South Pembrokeshire. The spot which proved so attractive to subsequent adventurers was either unknown or uninviting to the Romans. We do not meet on the map of South Pembrokeshire with any trace of such words as *Colonia*, or *Municipia*; there are no names such as *Chester*, *Cester*, *Car*, or *Cacr*, indicating the existence of Roman camps, stations, or legions. There is no vestige of *Street*, *Way*, *Ford*, *Pon* (Bridge), or *Wall*. As far as this locality is concerned

* Rev. Isaac Taylor's "Words and Places."

there is not even the smallest particle of evidence supplied of the Romans having invaded and occupied Britain.

We come next to the Saxon element; in the fifth and sixth centuries we find that the Saxons were, if not so widely as in England, yet, to some extent, the occupiers and owners of the land in South Pembrokeshire. If we leave unquestioned the sweeping and conjectural statement of Mr. Taylor, in "Words and Places," that the last syllable which is so frequently met with in such names as HAROLDSTON, BUCKSTON, AMBLESTON, CREAMSTON, "is not Anglo-Saxon *ton*," we have yet remaining conclusive evidence of Teutonic occupation in such words as *Honeyborough*, *Scotsborough*, *Brownslade*.

"The ravages and settlements of the Danes occupy a prominent place in the history of England during the greater part of three centuries; and the local nomenclature of England bears very strong marks of the presence of these Northmen in every region in which they settled. At the end of Alfred's reign the Danish, or Scandinavian immigrants, had full possession of a vast tract in the northern and north-eastern part of England;" so wrote the late Mr. Pashley in the *Edinburgh Review* for April, 1860. We can supplement his statements by saying, that in few parts of Great Britain do the Scandinavian remains crop out more prominently than in "Little England beyond Wales." Far removed as this part of the island was from the Dane, by skirting the coast he found it; and his sea-faring habits led him to appreciate and grasp such an invaluable prize as its deep land-locked creeks offered. He has left his records in the names of HAVERFORDWEST, WHITEFORD, and SKERRYFORD, in the creeks of WATHWICK, OXWICK, HELWICK. The rocks and islands which stud the coast bear Scandinavian names, as STACK ROCK, STACPOLE Head, SKOKHOLM Island, WORM'S Head, CALDY (Cold) Island, &c.

We come now to the last, and, in many respects, the most important incursion of foreigners into Pembrokeshire. We learn that in the time of Henry I, a Norman count, called Richard of Eu, conquered the Welsh province of *Divet*, or *Pembrok*, with an army composed of Brabançons, Normans, and English, who had been reduced by the evils of the conquest in their own county to the condition of adventurers and conquerors of the country of others. Richard, the leader of this mercenary band, displayed such courage and physical power in the battles, as to win from his soldiers the name of *Stronge-boghe*; and though the epithet was not understood by the Norman soldiers, yet it remained hereditary in the family of their chief. Richard *Stronghe-boghe*, and his companions in arms, repaired by sea to the westernmost point of the land of *Divet*, and drove

the Celtic population toward the east, putting to death all he could catch. The Brabangons, who took so prominent and successful a part in conquering the district, possessed themselves of the houses, villages, and towns, and erected castles to secure themselves from the incursions of the vanquished natives. The Flemings and the Normans holding the higher ranks in the army were the most favoured in the partition of the soil, and their posterity became the new lords and rich landholders of the county. Several centuries after these nobles and wealthy proprietors were still distinguished by their names of foreign etymology—preceded by the particle *de* or the word *fitz*. The descendants of the English enlisted in this expedition composed the middle class of small proprietors and free farmers. Their language became the ordinary tongue of the conquered territory, and banished from it all traces of Welsh. This was the introduction of Flemings into Pembrokeshire. In coming thus they acquired at once a knowledge and love of the beautiful territory. They had their appetites whetted for the enjoyment of a country which supplied more than all the advantages, with scarcely any of the disadvantages belonging to their native land. They were a hard robust race, fond of the sea, and skilful in agriculture. In the new district they found every feature to their taste, and adapted to develop their energies. They found it in every respect a goodly land, and to it they invited their friends and relatives, who were nothing loth to leave the low sandy soil of Flanders for a fruitful country, having a beautiful climate, where they would be safe from the irruptions of the sea. Thus tribe after tribe and company after company of the Flemings came, till the land of *Pembrok* was full of them.

There was only one danger which threatened them in their new territory, and that was the vengeful spirit of the expelled Celt, who was in no wise disposed to allow the powerful marauder to hold undisputed sway. The noblemen who had seized the fair domains of the Welsh were continually harrassed by the conquered race. Many and desperate were the fierce onslaughts made upon the new and by no means rightful owners of the land. At first the natives had the advantage over the invaders in this warfare in having their forests, hills, and fastnesses to retreat to. The Fleming held only the low land, where there was no shelter or refuge except in the sea; but the Welsh could fall back into the dense thickets, where he was perfectly secure. In order to protect themselves, the Flemish landowners imported a large number of their fellow-countrymen as masons and carpenters for the purpose of erecting the numerous castles, the remains of which are objects of great interest at the present time. In addition to building castles for the feudal lords, these

Flemish craftsmen put up the walls and fortresses around the towns of Haverfordwest, Pembroke, and Tenby, and those many church towers too, which so distinctly tell in their battlemented parapets and loop-holes of the hands that reared them, and of the troublous times in which they were built. In this immigration there was another settlement of Flemings, and another most important element in society supplied; and so the Welsh for ever lost what the Flemings secured, "Little England beyond Wales."

Subsequently to the erection of the castles, fortresses, and walled towns, there were several immigrations of Flemings. In the period between the years 1106 and 1120, the sand hills of Flanders were repeatedly swept away by storms, and the country was inundated by the sea. Great suffering followed each irruption of the sea, and the people, influenced by the facts that the mother of Henry I., then King of England, was daughter of the Earl of Flanders, and that many of their countrymen had already found a happy home in England, fled hither after these repeated calamities. Henry very naturally sympathized with the distressed refugees, and aided them in settling down in different parts of his dominions. The English and Flemings, however, did not agree, and in some places very serious contests were waged. Henry then prudently resolved to remove all the Flemings into one district; and as South Pembrokeshire, or *Roos*, as it was then called, had been already appropriated by them, and was geographically adapted for their pursuits, and isolated from the rest of the kingdom, he made it the Flemish settlement. The Welsh Chronicle states that about the year 1155, Henry II. banished all the Flemings whom King Stephen had brought in, and sent them to their cousins in West Wales.

Thus we have given a brief account of a people whose physiognomy, social habits, mental and moral features, as well as language, are essentially different from the Welsh who live all around them.

If any readers of this paper should feel disposed to spend their summer holidays in South Pembrokeshire, they will find more than abundant objects of interest of every kind to engage their thoughts and spare moments. For ourselves, we shall never forget a short trip to "Little England beyond Wales."

THE FACE OF CHRIST.

THERE are disciples to whom the sense of personal relationship and loyalty to Christ, and of blessed fellowship with Him, is a large part of their spiritual life, and absolutely indispensable. And some of these are at times conscious of a desire and an effort to realize his presence more effectually by attempting to picture Him as He was in the days of his flesh. There are moments when they seek, in holy thought, by the aid of a sanctified imagination, to place Him before them as they meditate or pray in the secret chamber. They think (perhaps oftener in the early part of their Christian course) that could they only see Him as He was, they too could kneel at his feet, and kiss the hem of his garment, or, it may be, even lean on his peaceful bosom. "Blessed," as they are pronounced to be, "who have not seen and yet have believed," they nevertheless long to see that face in which they think they could read now so much more than any of his contemporaries did. The wish is natural. And it is not surprising that, despite the assurance that it was "expedient for us that He should depart," there is the thought that it would be a wonderful help to love and holiness and obedience if we could see Him as John saw Him, or the maid of Bethany. Has not the reader often tried to conceive what that face was? Or who has not sometimes wished that Art had been adequate to the task of handing down some trustworthy intimation at least of the face of the Son of the Blessed? "Ah!" the young disciple has sometimes sighed, "had there been a veritable likeness only!" It became Him, however, of whom are all things, and whose very silence and reticence are significant and ever worthy of his wisdom, to withhold this gratification of a perfectly natural desire.

Painters have tried their best, but who can be satisfied with even the best efforts of the greatest masters? A man may be a great painter, and yet may not have in his own soul that which alone can understand, much less appreciate, and again still less interpret, Christ. An Apostle felt himself totally unequal to the task of setting Him forth in *words*, and not even a Paul or a John could adequately represent Him by their *lives*; and who shall deem himself equal to the representation of Him by the more material means which the painter uses? "Without holiness no man can see the Lord." "The pure heart" is the organ of vision in the entire realm of the spiritual; and to such alone is the promise made of seeing God. The purer, the more seeing

That is the law. If any man, after mature thought, felt free to paint the Saviour of the world—“*Salvator mundi*”—it should be, from the first stroke to the last, an exercise holy as prayer. The studio should be to him a temple, a Holy of Holies; the canvass and pencils handled as reverently as sacramental wine; and the man himself work as devoutly as if kneeling on holier ground than that where Moses was enjoined to put off his shoes from his feet. His one object should be to commend his Lord to the increased reverence and love of his brethren, his one aim that which inspired the Apostles in their labours. All this is the least we must require of any man who ventures to paint for us his conceptions of the Christ. And then, even were such a one to present himself, on whose brow of light the sacred name was manifestly written, we should commend to his thoughtful consideration the wisdom of the ancient Greek painter, who, having to paint the sacrifice of Iphigenia by her father, Agamemnon, shrunk from the task of portraying a parent's face at such a moment, and chose to paint him with the head averted. He avoided attempting where failure was inevitable. Most of us, perhaps, felt that Mr. Ruskin's criticism on Holman Hunt's “Scape-goat” was too severe when he said, “Let Mr. Hunt be sure that he is able to paint a goat at all before he attempts to paint the scape-goat.” But the principle of the remark is just. It might be embodied as one of the canons of art. Rubens, revelling in colour, might paint the Rape of the Sabine Women; Rembrandt, absorbed in the marvellous effects of light and shade, might paint the Woman taken in Adultery, or even the Descent from the Cross; Vandyke, and well for him, might paint a gentleman; Titian, lapped softly in the sensuous, could paint warm human flesh; and Raphael could paint a Pope, or the Fornarina. But neither of them could paint a Jesus.

As we write we have before us a beautiful engraving of “The likeness of our Saviour,” so called, which is said to be copied from one cut on an emerald by command of Tiberius, and subsequently given by the Turkish Emperor to Innocent III. for the redemption of his brother, then a captive in Rome. It is an exceedingly fine face, beyond all doubt, and may serve, perhaps, to suggest to us, however faintly, something of one expression that was visible then. One of the most accomplished of living writers, a true poet, and not second to any in the realm of imaginative literature, a devout Christian, and of unusual sweetness and simplicity of character, once said to us that it seemed to him a most happy comment on the verse in Isaiah, “Who is blind but the Lord's servant?” The look is so thoroughly that of concentrated devotedness to the object before Him.

“The Light of the World,” by Holman Hunt, is a masterpiece,

no doubt; a marvellous picture, beyond any right of ours to praise—more precious than rubies. But when first we saw it, having heard much of it beforehand, and being taken to it by an artist whose acknowledged place in his own chosen department is first, and who, having placed us before it in silence, waited for several minutes before speaking, and then in a low voice asked, "What do you think?" our reply was, "Full of pathos as it is, yet that is not Jesus!" And presently we added, "That is not the second Adam, so much nobler than the first—not the King of men, and leader of all the host of God's chivalry—not—;" but we may spare the reader. And although that picture grew more and more upon us till it became a part of our spiritual treasure, yet still we feel the failure that was inevitable. It was more within the scope of sanctified genius, perhaps, to paint the boy Jesus in the Temple.

An Apostle speaks of seeing the glory of God in the face of Christ. An Apostle—Yes. Men see what they can see. And the other saying is true,—Men see only what they can see. And it is not enough, in order to our seeing, that we have the bodily organ of vision, and that the object itself be placed before our eyes. Just as the highest bred horse, with the clearest eye, does not see the landscape which he gallops over; so many a man has often, or it may be always, right before him the very excellency of spiritual beauty without the dimmest perception of it, without so much as the faintest suspicion even that there is anything to admire. Wood is not less responsive to the presence or touch even of a magnet, than some souls to the presence of the Divine, or even spiritual. And if Jesus were on earth now, as He once was in Judea, He might pass through our streets, He might come into our assemblies, He might enter our very homes, but it does not follow that we should see in Him "the image of the invisible God," or any marvellous manifestations whatever, or "any beauty that we should admire Him." I should not expect the covetous man, or the proud and haughty man, or the fleshly-minded man, or the man who used others only as his tools, crowning self as his bosom's only lord, or the mean man who sneaks through life without being hurt even by his own self-contempt, to see anything in the face of Christ to fill him with wonder and delight. All allowed and indulged sin blunts and destroys all the finer preceptions, all the moral sensibilities.

Yet the face of Jesus must have been such as was never seen before or after, if only there had been those about Him capable of perceiving the glory. One is sometimes ready to ask in reference to "the transfiguration," whether that was a supreme moment for him, or only for the disciples? Was it that He, for

a brief exceptional interval, underwent a transient elevating change? or, that their eyes, ordinarily holden, were for the time extraordinarily opened and strengthened, so that for some instants they saw, as an exception, what was nevertheless the habitual experience of their Lord?

The face of Christ! Why the human countenance itself, and speaking quite generally, is the most wonderful thing we can ever look upon in this world. Even an ordinary face is a whole world of revelation. And a modern writer * has only expressed some of the truth about it, in saying:—

“The human countenance especially is the painted stage and natural robing-room of the soul. It is no single, double, or triple dress, but wardrobes of costumes innumerable. Our seven ages have their liveries there, of every dye and cut, from the cradle to the bier; ruddy cheeks, merry dimples and plump stuffing for youth; line and furrow for many-thoughted age; carnation for the bridal morning, and heavenlier paleness for the new-found mother. Masks are there, indeed, for every time; and tragedy, comedy, and farce are positive nature in the skin. Every shade of passion has its mantle in that boudoir. All the legions of desires and hopes have uniforms and badges there at hand. It is the loom where the inner man weaves on the instant the garment of his mood, to dissolve again into current life when the hour or the moment is passed. There it is that love puts on its celestial rosy red, which is its proper hue; there lovely shame blushes, and mean shame looks earthy; there hatred contracts its wicked white; there jealousy picks from its own drawer its bodice of constant green; there anger clothes itself in black, and despair in the greyness of the dead; there hypocrisy plunders the rest, and takes all their dresses by turns; sorrow and penitence too have sackcloth there; and genius and inspiration in immortal hours, encinctured there with the unsought ancient halo, stand forth as present spirits in the supremacy of light. In a word, the compass of human nature, as it is seen and felt, is all to be referred to the inexhaustible representations of the skin.”

Now, just think. The soul of Christ was as clearly revealed in the face of Christ as it is possible for the living countenance to express the inward feelings. For we may be sure He never practised the arts of concealment. He never meant one thing, and looked another. And the varying lights and shadows, all delicate and tender, that chased one another across that exquisitely refined face were the play of his inward soul. One of

* “The Human Body and its connection with Man.” By J. T. Garth Wilkinson, M.R.C.S. and M.D.

our own poets, seeking to set forth the nobleness of his departed friend, speaks in lines that may well be allowed to be suggestive to us of something beyond.

“ To whom a thousand memories call, he,
Not being less but more than all
The gentleness he seemed to be;

“ Best seem'd the thing he was, and join'd
Each office of the social hour
To noble manners, as the flower
And native growth of noble mind.

“ Nor ever narrowness or spite,
Or villain fancy fleeting by,
Drew in the expression of an eye,
Where God and nature met in light.”

(*In Memoriam*, cx.)

If we will only bear in mind that He of whom we write never for one moment, yielded to envy, or jealousy, or pride, or selfishness, or any other conceivable form of evil, we shall feel that there must have been a most marvellous clearness in that eye—an eye full of light—and that perfect purity and righteousness and benevolence, a whole of majestic loveliness, was enshrined there. He was filled with the spirit of truth, and holiness, and goodness, the spirit of God, and that spirit shone through. His Father was ever with Him, ever speaking to his attentive soul, ever showing Him all things whatsoever He Himself did. He must have been more profoundly conscious of the presence of his Father than of the presence of any human being. All the things of earth, and all the men and women about Him, He saw in the light of the Divine countenance. He was full of the Divine. In Him abode all the fulness of the Godhead! How could there not be in the face of Jesus the very glory of God?

All the painters of the Crucifixion (at least, all that I have seen) have utterly and painfully failed to pourtray the truth. For the most part, they make far too much of the physical. They make the countenance almost exclusively expressive of the torture (too frequently, though not always, mere bodily torture), not of the holy and victorious spirit of love to man and loyalty to the Father, which was far mightier than the pain. They have been more anxious to touch our coarser feelings by their tragic power of art than to do justice (if I may use that, in this case, inappropriate term) to the sufferer, in whom the highest human nobleness was permeated by and representative of the divine. It may be suggested perhaps that “his countenance was more marred than any man’s.” True: but how marred? Did

any extremity of suffering ever vulgarize it? as so many a painter has brought the expression down to a most unworthy level. Yes, his countenance *was* more marred than any man's, but, as it was never marred by the flitting across it of any unhallowed feeling, so neither was it from those mere bodily pangs which the thieves crucified with Him felt perhaps as keenly almost as He. It was the sublime agony of a spirit that, by virtue of its perfect love and righteousness and goodness, and in the vast measure thereof, felt the evil of men's sins—men, his brothers, whom He could no more cease to love and pity and yearn over than He could cease to be. The mighty prayer, "Father, forgive them!" came pleadingly from those pale lips—not of set purpose as it were, just to show how magnanimously forgiving He was—but in sublime unconsciousness for a moment of their hearing Him. Love was swelling in his heart so masterfully that it could not be repressed, and out it came, in spite of all the surroundings, a prayer that could not be kept back. The love must express itself, and just then it could express itself only in prayer.

One painter, we are told, being commissioned by the Pope to paint the Crucifixion, and to let it be his masterpiece, bribed a man by a large payment to let himself be bound by cords on a cross, that the artist might copy accurately all the bodily manifestations of distress. And when all was finished except the dying expression, the painter ruthlessly plunged a dagger into the man's breast, that he might copy the ghastliest expressions of mortal agony! But was that dying man a dying Christ? So the French painter, David, constantly attended the executions that took place by wholesale during the French Revolution. He placed himself on the scaffold, with the materials of his art, that he might catch and preserve the last looks which men about to die cast on all around. He saw but dying Frenchmen, however—a Vergniaud at the best. How could he any the better for that paint a Christ?

Yes, we see what we can see. Only that, and no more. When Jesus presented himself to John the Baptist, the desert-prophet was struck with profoundest reverence, and even awe, at the majesty of the moral beauty that met his prepared eye; and hardly could he be persuaded to administer the rite that his Galilean kinsman asked at his hands. This was before the sign had been given him which he had been taught to look for, and by which he was to know The Promised One. So when the noble and guileless (noble, because guileless) Nathanael first caught sight of the person and face of Jesus, and had heard but one single sentence from those gracious lips, although as yet known to him only as a Galilean peasant—so that he had asked, "Can there any good thing come out of Galilee?"—he fell on his

knees as before a superior being. He instinctively felt himself in the presence of the true King of men, and forthwith, using the highest titles known to him, he exclaimed, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God! Thou art the King of Israel!" When the Syro-Phenician woman saw Him, she fell down at his feet, and worshipped Him; and having looked with all an anxious mother's yearning love for her afflicted child on the face of Christ, having for an instant looked into his eye, she forthwith conceived so strong a faith in Him that none of his testingly discouraging words could disturb her new-born confidence, and she believed in Him, not only beyond, but even against, the tenour of his own words. So it was with children, as it had been with child-like souls. We all know how shy they are of strangers, our children of two and three years old, how the more a stranger tries to take them the more they turn away and hide themselves on their mother's breast. But when they gazed on the face of Jesus, they willingly went to his arms, and nestled in his bosom. They felt the blessing He breathed.

If the rabble saw nothing to arrest them; if the vulgar souls (whether the vulgar poor, or the vulgar rich) saw nothing of divinity; if priests and scribes with Pharisees and Sadducees saw no heavenliness; that was because long-allowed worldliness and sordidness and selfishness had blinded them. For there was "the glory of God in the face of Christ"—the glory of the divine character—as another Apostle says, "The WORD was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." But that other word was also true, "The light shined in the darkness, but the darkness comprehended it not." Heaven, in the person of Christ, its King, was before their eyes, and they asked, Where?

And now we have not, it is true, the physical form of the Son of God before our bodily eyes; but God has taken—not, indeed, all possible, but—all desirable methods of setting forth his Son plainly before our mind's eye, before the conscience and the heart. And we can see Him, if we will, as Paul saw Him, who was abundantly content not to know Him according to the flesh. The Evangelists are our artists, who, as Bezaleel was inspired for the work of the material Jewish temple, are more loftily inspired of God for the higher work of the spiritual temple, to pourtray—not the figures of cherubin on the vail, or to carve them on the covering of the ark, but—the Christ of God; "that" seeing, and believing, reverencing, and lovingly obeying, "we may have life." He is the Gospel in the Gospels—Himself the everlasting Gospel. The glad tidings Apostles were laden with were "the glad tidings of the glory of God in the face of

Christ." And Christ living, dying, and risen again, is as truly set forth before us as before the Galatians (iii. 1).

It is a solemn thought that if any man does not see "the glory of God in the face of Christ," it is because his mind is blinded, because he has allowed the god of this world to darken his soul. So says the Apostle of clearest insight, and largest and most loving heart, that any man ever had.

FOREIGN POLITICS.

ALL the wise prophets who have been looking forward to the year 1866 as a great crisis in European history must be tolerably satisfied with the course of events during the last six months. Perhaps these new unfoldings of the roll of destiny have not quite corresponded with the charts previously sketched out by the private interpreters of prophecy; but still it must now be confessed that there has been enough to make the year remarkable. Rarely, indeed, has there been a revolution so rapid, so unexpected, and, at the same time, so complete as that which we have just witnessed. It seems but yesterday since we were reading in the columns of the *Times*, and elsewhere, demonstrations of the absolute invincibility of Austria, and of the miserable folly of Bismarck in provoking so hopeless a contest. Benedek was the greatest of living generals, and he was at the head of one of the finest armies in Europe (the writers, by the way, cleverly keeping out of sight the fact that this finest of armies has, from the days of Frederick the Great down to those of Magenta and Solferino, shown a singular facility of allowing itself to be beaten when least expected);—what could Prussia, even with the aid of Italy, do against such odds? The very plan of the campaign [that was to have been fought, and was to have ended in the annihilation of Prussia's hopes of supremacy, if not of her empire altogether, was indicated; and the only doubt seemed to be whether she would really have the audacity to enter upon so unequal a struggle. The wish, too, was in many cases, father to the thought; and that not only among the aristocratic and Conservative classes, with whom Austria has always been a favorite, but even among a large number of liberal-minded men, who, if they did not love Austria, at all events hated Prussia more. It may be doubted, indeed, whether six months ago, there was any European power more

unpopular amongst us than Prussia. Her mean and selfish policy, both in the Crimean and Danish wars, her uncourteous treatment of English travellers, her cynical contempt of all considerations of justice and international law, her intense sympathy with despotic proceedings everywhere, had created a strong feeling of dislike, intensified by the aversion to the crafty and unscrupulous character of Bismarck himself. Despite, therefore, our common Protestantism, despite the intimate family alliance, despite the attachment felt by Englishmen to the eldest daughter of their Queen, the all but universal hope and expectation was, that Prussia might be humiliated in the struggle which her own ambition had provoked. If this could have been accomplished without any advantage to Austria it would have been preferred; but so strong was the feeling with numbers, that even the interests of Italy would have been sacrificed for the time. Indeed she was blamed for taking advantage of the complications of Austria to urge her own claims, and it was contended that, with a chivalrous generosity, of which we confess we find no examples in the history of nations, she should have waived her own interests rather than accept any benefit from Prussia.

Of course all this is changed now. Prussia has presented us a marvellous example of administrative abilities, especially in relation to military affairs. If Bismarck has not become a hero, he is no longer spoken of in the unparliamentary terms which so recently were freely employed in relation to him; the defects of Austria are now very clearly perceived, and we are invited to rejoice in the prospect of a free, united, and powerful Germany. For ourselves, we never fell into the one extreme, and we do not intend to be betrayed into the other. We do not think Bismarck much worse than other continental statesmen, and we do not now consider him much better. More sagacious, more resolute, more crafty, more skilful in the adaptation of means to the end he is, but not more friendly nor yet, perhaps, more hostile to the cause of liberty than his compeers. He wants to make Prussia Germany, Germany the first power in Europe, and himself first and absolute in Prussia. This appears to us to be the extent of his patriotism, while the secret of his ability is to be found quite as much in his audacity and cynical scorn of all restraining principles as in any remarkable intellectual foresight. As for Austria, we could never forget the crimes of the House of Hapsburg during a long series of years against national right and popular liberty, the wrongs of Hungary and the oppressions of Lombardy; and we could not wish her success in a struggle where her victory meant the disappointment of the just hopes of Italy, and the perpetuation of the cruel bondage of Venetia.

But though she never had our sympathies, we are not disposed to insult her in the hour of her calamity, nor to fall down and do homage to her triumphant rival. We think we can detect some of the causes of her extraordinary collapse; and we do not, therefore, see in it that solemn warning to England as to the possibility of her incurring a similar fate on which some of our newspaper-preachers read us such grave and impressive homilies. We can recognize, too, some of the blessings which may come to human freedom, and some of the advantages which may ultimately accrue even to herself from her present fall. But however disposed we might have been, under other circumstances, to speak harshly of a despotism which has blighted some of the fairest provinces of Europe, we cannot, in the view of her extreme prostration, dwell upon the errors for which so terrible a retribution has overtaken her; nor can we, while ignorant of the way in which Prussia may use her triumph, indulge in the language of premature congratulation on the prospects of Germany.

It is true, indeed, that the weak and divided condition of Germany has been not more an injury to herself than it has been a serious hindrance to the progress of national liberty in Europe. With the multitude of little kingdoms and principalities into which she was split up, it was impossible that there should be any high national spirit, or any real growth of the people. In the absence of unity there could be no resolute and successful effort for freedom. The kinglets, dukes, and princes sat as a heavy incubus upon their subjects, and in sweeping them away the King of Prussia has done good service to humanity. His rule at first may possibly not be much better than theirs; but by abolishing these petty distinctions he has made a great nation, which, as it gains the consciousness of its own power, will assert its rights. We do not think, therefore, that it is necessary to repose any implicit faith in Prussian purposes, or to have any exalted opinions of her principles of government, in order to believe that Germany has before her a brighter future as the result of the recent changes. It is something to have the strong feeling of nationality evoked; something to see the goal, towards which patriotic hopes and aspirations have been pointing for years, at length brought within view; something that the able men of the country who have been mere dreamers or book-worms—because, in truth, they had not the opportunity of becoming anything more efficient on the narrow theatre to which their energies were restricted—should have an enlarged field of action, and a greater opportunity of rendering their country good service; something that there is a prospect of political life and political struggle becoming a reality and not a sham. Very

decent, respectable gentlemen some of these dispossessed sovereigns may have been; very probably, like our own Charles I., amiable husbands and affectionate fathers; perhaps, had they lived in England, and been able to conform themselves to our notions of law, they might have made very fair chairmen of Quarter Sessions; but their anomalous and absurd position as rulers, under circumstances which precluded the very possibility of their doing anything noble or great, made their governments at once a burden and a mockery. Prussia will at all events have the means of pursuing a different kind of policy, and at present at least is not without the ambition to take that prominent part in European politics which her now great resources entitle her to assume. But in order to be strong abroad, she must be free and united at home, and Count Bismarck must be sadly lacking in that sagacity which is ascribed to him, if he does not clearly perceive this. He at least is too wise to suppose that the crushing defeat and humiliation of a mighty empire like that of Austria is to be ascribed solely to the destructive powers of the needle-gun, or to the superiority of Prussian military administration. He must be able to appreciate the mighty force resident in strong popular enthusiasm, and must know that that enthusiasm can only be called forth on behalf of a government which lays deep the foundations of its power in its sympathy with popular aspirations, and its recognition of popular rights. His own appeals to well-known German hopes and desires, prove that he is not insensible to the power which may thus be wielded, and his own experience of Austrian weakness must have shown him the hollowness of power resting solely upon bayonets, to the neglect of the deepest instincts and most earnest feelings of a people. However little, therefore, he may love liberty, and however indisposed to extend constitutional rights he may be, the very necessities of his position will compel him to pay some deference to the popular will.

Besides, these Germans are a strong-headed, strong-willed, freedom-loving people; long suffering indeed, and not easily provoked to popular insurrection; a little too fond we fancy them of magniloquent declamation, and a little too sluggish in reducing their grand ideas to practice, but not to be easily cajoled or permanently held in bondage. For a time, perhaps, the members of the different parts of the kingdom will not easily understand each other's aims and purposes, or at once associate themselves for the assertion of their common rights, but difficulties of this character will be gradually removed by mutual intercourse; they will learn that they have a common end to seek, and a common foe to oppose, and when once thoroughly united, their force must be irresistible. It must be

remembered too, that the feelings of personal loyalty which have induced the Prussians to bear with the absurd freaks of their monarchs, whose childish talk about the divine right of kings, their constant attempts to stretch their own prerogatives in defiance of law, precedent, national right, and their frequent violations of the very constitutions they themselves had granted will have no place in the hearts of the population now brought under their sceptre. Count Bismarck will be a wise man if, recognizing this, he seeks to conciliate general support by a free and popular administration; but if his evil genius should betray him into another course, there will be sufficient force in the strong national sentiment, which is sure to be aroused, to beat down the man who does not understand, that even for his victory over Austria, he is indebted as much to intense love of the Fatherland as to the skill of his tactics, the perfection of his military discipline, or the destructive powers of his needle-guns.

Some calculations have been made as to the increased power which Protestantism must reap in consequence of the aggrandizement of the great Protestant power of Germany. In such statistics we place but little confidence. Protestantism and liberty alike are pretty sure ultimately to gain by the downfall of a power which has always used its influence on behalf of reaction of every kind, which was resolutely opposed to all freedom of thought, and whose bayonets were always at the command of priestism, bigotry, and superstition. If, however, the result were to be only the extension of the State-Churchism of Prussia, we should not find any great reason to congratulate ourselves. It is, after all, only a degree better than Popery itself—hardly less benumbing to the conscience, or less hostile to true religious liberty. But, again, our hope is in the people rather than in the Government. They are, at all events, opposed to priestly tyranny, and it may be expected that the opportunities for the diffusion of truth will be more abundant, and that the great influence of a united Germany will be thrown into the scale in favour of progression and liberty. Liberty, indeed, is all that we desire. We have no wish, even on behalf of truth, to oppose force to force; our reliance is not on the *fiats* of Kings, or the decrees of Parliament, but on the inherent strength of the principles we hold, and on the gradual enlightenment of the people to whom they are addressed; and in the extension of free institutions, therefore, we find a prospect of the spread of Evangelical truth in Germany.

The position of Louis Napoleon is hardly less of a surprise to Europe than that of his Austrian rival. His career has hitherto been so successful—he has so cleverly contrived to secure his own ends, either by diplomacy or war—he was so generally regarded as the arbiter in European affairs—that the succession

of disappointments through which he has recently passed must have been as mortifying to himself as they have been an astonishment to spectators. The triumph of Prussia was at first expected to be the signal for decisive action on the part of France. "Within a month Louis Napoleon will be on the Rhine"—"We are on the eve of a new and more bloody war"—"Bismarck will have to follow Cavour's example, and pay a royalty on his acquisitions." These were the predictions which were heard on every side immediately after the battle of Sadowa, and they were accompanied by rumours that the French fleet had been despatched to the Mediterranean, that orders had been given for the mobilization of the army, and the like. When the news came that some demand had been made upon Prussia for compensation, all felt that it was the beginning of the end; the Consols gave the usual signs of extreme sensitiveness, and every telegram was anxiously looked for, with the apprehension that it might be the precursor of war. And when, on the contrary, tidings were brought that Prussia had refused any concession, and that the Emperor had quietly submitted to the inevitable necessity of the hour, they were first received with a laugh of incredulity, and when disbelief was no longer possible, with a knowing nod, which implied that there was more below the surface than appeared—that Louis Napoleon was only biding his time, and that, sooner or later, the price must be paid. It would now seem, however, that improbable as it might be thought, Bismarck has crowned his other achievements by this great diplomatic victory over France, that the Emperor has been compelled to submit to a decided snub in the sight of all Europe, and that, making a virtue of necessity, he is disposed quietly to accept the new order of things. Whether it is to be ascribed to the failing state of his health, to his unwillingness to face a struggle with the people of Germany, in which, if defeated, he must peril the fortunes of his dynasty, to any consciousness of deficiency in his military preparations, or to some more recondite cause, it is not for us to enquire, but simply to note the fact, and to rejoice that Europe is, for the present at least, spared the bloody horrors of another war. The removal of M. Drouyn de Lhuys, and still more the remarkable circular addressed by M. de Lavallette, would seem to indicate the commencement of a new and more pacific policy, of which all nations, and ourselves among the number, may reap the benefit in reduced armaments, and the concentration of their energies upon the pursuits of commerce. There is now little doubt that the terms of agreement with Italy will be honourably carried out, that the French troops will be withdrawn from Rome before the close of the year, and the Papacy left to its fate. It is to be hoped that Italy will then quietly bide her time, that, content with the

great results she has realized, she will not by impatience frustrate or delay the accomplishment of her full hopes, that she will desist from the extravagant and wasteful military expenditure on which she has lavished resources greatly needed for internal improvement, and that her future career will be all that her most sanguine friends can desire. If so, even with the Eastern difficulty, there may be hopes of an era of peace. We do not, and dare not, predict—we can only express the hope which the signs of the hour seem to warrant.

As to the course which England should take amid all these complications, that seems sufficiently clear, and, happily, most classes of politicians are agreed upon it. We have had quite enough of needless jealousies, entangling complications, gratuitous interferences with matters in which we had no real interest. We are, therefore, perfectly easy under the bitter reproaches which Mr. Ruskin addresses to us for our neutrality in the Danish war; we are not moved by the earnest exhortations which Mr. Pope Hennessy addresses on behalf of his friend the Emperor; we are not greatly troubled by the assertions about our waning influence on the Continent. In the face of the wreck of all that we accomplished, at such terrible cost, in 1815, the unsettling of everything we thought we had most firmly established, and the renewal of the decisions to which we attached so much importance, we may well hesitate before we are induced to commit ourselves to a similar policy. We have learned very slowly, but we hope we have learned, that our strength lies in the development of our great manufacturing and commercial power, in the elevation of our people, and in the cultivation of the most friendly relations with all other nations. Of course, we have our own opinions as to the righteousness of certain kinds of policy, or the expediency of particular territorial arrangements, but the days, we hope, are past for ever when a regard to our own dignity was supposed to entail on us the necessity of enforcing our own views upon the adoption of other people. The most distressing and disheartening feature in connection with recent events has been the extent to which mere ambition has been the guiding principle of national action, and the old maxim that "Might is right" has been accepted. But we shall most successfully contend against this, not by the employment of physical force ourselves, but rather by the adoption of a wise, moderate, equitable policy which shall command respect by its justice, and which, in the result, shall prove that they are really the greatest nations who abjure everything like wrong, and are content with the distinction to be earned in the bloodless fields of literature, science, commerce, and religion, in preference to that which is only to be won at the cost of bloodshed and misery.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"NOTES ON INSPIRATION."

MR. EDITOR,—As you do not claim for yourself and your literary staff the infallibility which you deny to the inspired writers, you will not object to a few words of friendly criticism on your article headed as above.

The writer has failed to distinguish between the alleged infallibility of the inspired writings and the infallibility of the men who wrote them. The distinction is an important one, and must not be overlooked in judging of the doctrine of plenary inspiration. The full and infallible inspiration for which we contend had respect to *the writings only*, and not to the character and conduct of the inspired penmen. Inspiration neither presupposed nor produced perfect holiness and freedom from fault in those who were inspired. Some, who were at times the subjects of it, were wholly destitute of spiritual excellence, as Balaam and Caiaphas. And the "holy Prophets" and Apostles were fallible *as men*, and fell into sin; but their errors and faults, as in the case of Peter, who was chided by Paul, had respect to their conduct as fallible and peccable men, and not to their teaching and writing as divinely inspired Prophets and Apostles. It is not affirmed that they were secured against all possible deviations from duty and made perfectly holy in their private capacity—for it was no part of the aim of inspiration to make its subjects perfect,—but that officially, as the organs of divine communication, and while in the exercise of their supernatural functions, they were under infallible guidance. To prove the fallibility of the men does not disprove the infallibility of what they wrote under divine direction; and their faults and failings, which were freely acknowledged and reprehended, cannot in fairness be adduced in contradiction of the plenary inspiration of their writings.

Again, the writer charges the advocates of plenary inspiration with holding "that every word in the Bible is true whoever speaks it; that all the Scriptures stand on the same level, &c." And he would persuade his readers that this is involved in the "orthodox" view. For myself, I don't at all believe that this is "a very popular and wide-spread conception." On the contrary, it is held by those only who have never thought on the subject. Every thoughtful reader of the Bible must surely see that there is much in it which is merely human, and much also

that is false and wicked—the sentiments of evil spirits and bad men—the reproaches and false accusations which the cavilling scribes cast upon the Saviour—the words of denial uttered by Peter—the song of Deborah in which she eulogizes the tragic transaction of Jael—and the speeches of Job's friends, and other recorded utterances and facts which are most contrary to the mind and will of God. The purposes of a revelation required that it should contain a veritable record of the character and conduct of men, both good and bad, as well as a revelation of God; and these purposes are accomplished by such faithful disclosures of the workings of the human mind as it seemed good to the Divine Spirit thus to put on record. The infallibility of the Bible is no more impugned by the presence of such things than the veracity of ordinary Church historians is affected by the record of the erroneous sentiments of heretics, and the utterances of wicked men in their pages. Infallible inspiration does not at all involve the idea that all the utterances and actions recorded in the Scriptures were dictated by the Spirit of God; but only that He has judged it necessary to record them, and has vouched for the veracity of the record. The Bible consists greatly of historical facts and transcripts from existing histories, such as the book of Esther, extracted chiefly from the chronicles of the Kings of Persia, and which, along with other documents, it seemed good to the Divine Spirit to incorporate with the sacred writings. These, with much besides that is contained in the Scriptures, were matters with which the sacred writers were familiar, apart from the Spirit's teaching; but they still needed a divine superintendency to guide their selection of materials, to guarantee their perfect accuracy, and to adapt them to the ends they were designed to answer. The question is not whether the things put on record are themselves true and proper—in so far as they relate to mere secondary matters, and not to primary supernatural communications—but whether they are accurately recorded? The falsity of the facts in no way affects the infallibility of the writers.

And does not this in part meet the objection grounded on the alleged absence of harmony between the several genealogies? The Evangelists did not and could not furnish these from their own knowledge. They merely transcribed from existing documents. And the question as affecting their infallibility is not, are the genealogies in all respects accurate, but are they accurately transcribed? The "other discrepancies," adduced by the writer to disprove the infallibility of the inspired penmen admit of easy adjustment; for as Henry Rogers has truly said of all alleged discrepancies, "The man who takes pains enough to *see them*, only needs to take a little more, and he will see *through*

them." The smallest amount of common sense will surely suffice to dispose of the difficulty regarding the blind men and the demoniacs; for, as Matthew Henry quaintly says, respecting the angels at the sepulchre, "if there were *two*, there was of course *one*." While some of the Evangelists mention only one demoniac and one blind man, they do not say there was *only one*; and they may have had reasons for singling out and describing one of the two. Where, then, is the discrepancy? As to the miracle at Jericho, it is probable that, during our Lord's stay there, He went in and out; and as the time drew near for His departure, on entering the city for the last time, as Luke afterwards says, He "entered and passed through Jericho," He saw the blind men and cured them.

In regard to "the case of Stephen," there is no positive proof that he spake under inspiration. Even admitting that some of his statements were erroneous, though this is not clearly established, yet the question, as affecting the infallibility of Scripture, is not, did Stephen say what was not true, but has the inspired Evangelist accurately recorded what he actually said? It may be remarked that it was after he had finished his address, he is said to have been "full of the Holy Ghost." If the writer assumes that he was all the while speaking as moved by the Holy Spirit, then to charge him with uttering falsehoods, involves what the writer would shrink from avowing. The error charged upon him in relation to the period of the Israelites' sojourn in Egypt has little foundation. If they were 430 years in Egypt, they were of course there 400 years, as Stephen, speaking in round numbers, according to custom, says they were.

There are other alleged discrepancies, which have respect for the most part to names and numbers, and dates and other minor circumstances. In so far as they *are real*, they have arisen probably in the course of the transmission of the ancient books, and so appertain entirely to the human copy, and not to the inspired text; for in the constant transcription and translation into various tongues, mistakes must occur, unless miraculously prevented; and they do not therefore at all affect the integrity of the original writings. And in so far as they are *apparent* only, and appertain to the actual productions of inspired men, do they not subserve the evidences of the authenticity of the sacred records? Some of them are so obvious that their appearance in the inspired pages can be accounted for only on the admission that there must be real harmony where there is such manifest seeming disagreement. As the eloquent author of the *Eclipse of Faith* has expressed it, "certain discrepancies have been left on the surface (which criticism would be sure to point

out) as if for the very purpose of affording guarantees and vouchers against the suspicion of collusion. The discord increases the harmony."

Moreover, it is just what might be expected in a collection of books by so many different authors, written at such distant intervals, and under such diversified circumstances, abounding with narratives, and histories, and biographies, in the difficult form of dramatic representation, and in which the several writers record frequently the same events, under different aspects, and with different objects; in a collection of books thus composed, we might expect to find many apparent discrepancies; just as there are discrepancies in other authors, which are found on examination to be apparent only. And if men would but deal with the sacred writers as they do with others, and take for granted some unknown circumstances, which, if known, would harmonize apparently counter statements, and rectify seemingly erroneous ones, they would surely be more reluctant, as they would see less occasion, to adopt a restricted theory of inspiration which admits the existence of errors in the sacred Scriptures.

In opposition to the view of the writer, I think that the Prophets and Apostles and Evangelists did claim infallibility for their writings. It would be easy to cite statements which show that they considered themselves under the infallible guidance of the Spirit of God in what they recorded, and that they claimed for their instructions and supernatural communications, divine authority. But whether or not the Bible is to be regarded as an infallible book—not in the sense of being all true, but in the sense of being composed under the infallible guidance of the spirit of truth—it is manifest that there is nothing in what is advanced by the author of the "Notes on Inspiration" to invalidate its claims to be so considered.

As your able journal is read by many who have no sympathy with its views on Inspiration and other subjects, it is only fair that you should give occasional opportunity of expressing dissent. And I trust to your candour to give insertion to the foregoing criticism.'

Yours respectfully,

St. Helier's, Jersey.
Sept. 5, 1866.

A. E. PEARCE.

[NOTE.—We very willingly accede to Mr. Pearce's request for opportunity to point out the supposed errors of our respected contributor, Llenard. Our one object is truth; and fair and honourable discussion is one means of attaining to the detection of error, and so of clearing the way for something better. We are inclined to think that one of many causes which have concurred to bring the Christian Church into its present somewhat

uneasy position is—the having covered more ground than can well be maintained, so that the enemy has some advantage in choice of point for assault. It is however as wise in controversy as in a campaign to occupy no position which is needlessly embarrassing and will have to be surrendered.

We should have thought Mr. Pearce would have preferred to wait till the writer had concluded his *Notes on Inspiration*, but as he has sent us his animadversions, we have willingly printed them; and no doubt the gentleman animadverted on (an esteemed minister of one of the “straitest” of our many “sects”) will give them the consideration which is due, and say what he may deem fitting.

But it would be an advantage which, we are sure, Llenard would highly appreciate, if Mr. Pearce would kindly furnish those proofs, which he says are easily supplied, that the inspired writers did expressly assert their own infallibility. We are sadly afraid Llenard must have overlooked them—perhaps is even ignorant of them; in which case Mr. Pearce will be able to render him a valuable (or indeed invaluable) service, for which we almost venture to stand sponsors that he shall be exceedingly grateful. If Mr. Pearce therefore will kindly communicate with us at once, his added proofs shall be forwarded without delay to the writer of the *Notes on Inspiration*, for acknowledgment in our next number.—ED.]

BRIEF NOTICES OF BOOKS.

A History of the Free Churches of England from A. D. 1688 to the Present Time. By HERBERT S. SKEATS. Part I. Price Two Shillings. London: Arthur Miall. 1866.

If there were any part of a magazine which might be considered the place of honour, that place in the *Christian Spectator* would most assuredly be due to the author of the work here announced. For to Mr. Skeats the *Christian Spectator* owes its existence. The idea of such a periodical originated entirely with him, and at his own expense he started it, devoting time and money and literary talent to it for many years, until it had made for itself no mean position in the periodical literature of the day. For eleven years, viz., from 1851 onward, Mr. Skeats was the judicious, indefatigable, and disinterested editor, to whom an increasing circle of intelligent Christians—chiefly, but by no means exclusively, of the various Nonconformist bodies—were indebted for no mean amount of intellectual and spiritual help.

When he announced his intention to write a *History of the Free Churches*, those who knew him, whether personally, or through his literary and political labours, received the announcement with much gratification, convinced that such subjects as the historian of the Free Churches would have to treat could not be in hands more able or more just. The work has been somewhat delayed, perhaps, but who could wish history to be hastily written? For ourselves we regret that the extreme haste with which almost everything is produced or done in

the present day is so apparent on all hands, and we will cheerfully wait while Mr. Skeats takes time to satisfy his own high sense of the desirable. However, as all subscribers to his History may not be so patient, here is a "First Part" issued, which we rather fear, so far from increasing their patience, may have, perhaps, the contrary effect of stimulating their desire to possess the whole.

By way of justifying our remarks on the author's fitness for his task, we give the opening paragraph of the first chapter, which, of course, is introductory.

"The struggles of English Nonconformists up to the time of the Revolution have been so often and so ably described, that it may seem to be unnecessary to add one more page to that painful yet honourable history. No Englishman can look back upon that history without shame, but no Nonconformist can look back upon it without pride. The conduct of the State and the conduct of the Church of that period are now uniformly condemned both by Statesmen and by Churchmen; and if it is necessary for the purposes of this history, that I should pass it in review, I wish it to be understood that I hold neither the State nor the Church of the present day responsible for acts then committed. It might seem superfluous, if not absurd, to make this remark, were it not the case that, when the facts of those times are revived, they are often treated as though the present historical descendants of the old ecclesiastical parties were in some manner accountable for them. No person of common sense dreams of taunting the ministry of Queen Victoria with the acts of the ministry of Charles the Second; but many persons, who are possessed of strong common sense in other matters, esteem it to be a natural thing to taunt the Established Church of the present day with the acts of the Established Church of three hundred years ago. And so, on the other side, men in whom high literary culture and ordinary common sense are often combined, seem to imagine that they have turned the flank of their opponent's position if they have proved that the Independents of the Commonwealth were persecutors, and that they not only had no objection to tithes and Church-rates, but that they held firmly by the theory of a State established religion. In so far as I may find occasion to repeat the history of religious persecution I shall do it with no such purposes as these. Men may be responsible, in no small degree, for the character and the acts of their descendants, but cannot be held responsible for the character or the acts of their forefathers."

If Mr. Skeats can write the whole of the book in this spirit of enlightened fairness, we may expect it to take and keep a high place in our historical literature. May life and health and energy and peace be continued to him for the accomplishment of his task.

Essays for the Times on Ecclesiastical and Social Subjects. By JAMES H. RIGG, D.D. London: Elliot Stock. 1866.

DR. RIGG is a minister of eminence in the Wesleyan body who deserves to be known and esteemed far beyond the limits of his own particular branch of the Church of Christ. By his ample acquirements and his wise use of many talents he is entitled to speak with a measure of authority on the subjects he deems it important to dwell on, and there are few among us who will not respect the writer of these *Essays*, and derive instruction from them, even if they have now and then, possibly, to withhold their assent to an occasional opinion. He

says, in his Preface, "I send forth this volume with some hope that it may assist in bringing Christian thinkers to an agreement on some of the pressing questions of the day." And we believe the writer fully entitled to entertain and express this hope. The contents of the volume are—I. A Few Words on the Relation of Wesleyan Methodism to the Established Church. II. The Vocation and Training of the Clergy. III. The Established Church—Defects and Remedies. IV. The Puritan Ancestors and High Church Parents of the Wesleys; A Sketch and a Study. V. Kingsley and Newman. VI. Pusey's Eirenicon. VII. Archbishop Manning and Doctor Pusey on "The Working of the Holy Ghost" among Separatists and Schismatics; or, Ultramontane Charity *versus* Anglican Charity. VIII. The History of Heterodox Speculation. IX. The Bible and Human Progress. X. Pauperism, Land Tenure, and the Clergy. XI. The Origin, Causes, and Cure of Pauperism. XII. Popular Education. Many of these papers have appeared in the *London Quarterly Review*, and one (the IXth) is a lecture delivered in Exeter Hall to the Young Men's Christian Association. Dr. Rigg takes a broad comprehensive view of the subjects he discusses, and shows both great insight and considerable power, combined with a large Christian Catholicity. Even where we dissent we respect him, and find his volume both instructive and intellectually invigorating; while such men as Father Newman, Archbishop Manning, and Doctor Pusey are handled in a style that shows the writer, not only master of their respective positions, but perfectly able, with admirable calmness and polished satire, if needful, to put them in their places.

Master and Scholar, &c. &c. By E. H. PLUMPTRE, M.A. London: Alexander Strahan. 1866.

ANOTHER volume of poems by Professor Plumptre, from whose "Lazarus" we gave a long extract in our last number. Mr. Plumptre is an accomplished scholar, a disciplined thinker, and a man of various sympathies, who loves to pass from Judea to Greece and Rome, from the days that are to those that have been, equally at home in sacred and classic lands. There is manifest much acquaintance with human nature and the subtle workings of the mind, and perceptiveness of the lights and shadows that play over the face of the soul, with much thorough love of righteousness and goodness. His perfect familiarity with the Greek poets, and his loving appreciation of the charms of ancient and modern metre, with the painstaking culture he has acquired, have given him considerable facility in producing verses that the cultivated reader will always welcome with kind respect. For ourselves we place this new volume on our Poets' Shelf with appreciative thanks, not doubting that we shall often take it down for a pleasant half-hour's companionship.

Arne. A Sketch of Norwegian Country Life. By BJÖRNSTJERN BJÖRNSEN. London: Alexander Strahan. 1866.

HERE is a book which must have our heartiest good word. It is full of charming illustrations of Norwegian peasant nature; and that

is just our own common human nature displaying itself in ways more true to simple life than can be possible in the more convention-ridden countries that we are most familiar with. We know no painter of manners, and of the workings of our common passions, who might not all but envy Björnson his truthfulness of perception and insight. A master's hand is constantly revealed by the deep significance of an apparently trivial touch or two. Anything more true to nature we have not seen for a long time. The men and women, the lads and lasses, of the old Scandinavian country live, and tell tales, and love without knowing it, and are glad and miserable, before our very eyes. We see their hearts beat, and can almost count the pulse. The author, who is an immense favourite in the North of Europe, will, we venture to predict, become almost as popular amongst ourselves. There is a marvellous freshness in his pages, which are redolent of the old pine forests of his native land, and echo the thunder of its cataracts, and the music of its falls. The translators deserve our thanks for introducing "Arne" to English readers,—a book which, we doubt not, will soon render the name of its author familiar through our land.

The North British Review. No. LXXXIX. September, 1866.

WE regret that this Number came into our hands too late for us to be able to do more than simply testify to its high excellence. Most of the articles are of permanent value. The first is devoted to Mr. George MacDonald's novels, and the writer shows an admirable power of appreciation both of the genius and the spiritual significance with which Mr. MacDonald's works abound. The more such an author is known and honoured the better for the age, and we sincerely hope the admirable article in the Review will serve to this end. The second article is devoted to Sir William Rowan Hamilton, and the writer shows himself competent to the task he has undertaken, and takes all possible pains to give the non-scientific reader some idea of the value of the labours of this extraordinary man. "Recent Humourists, viz., Aytoun, Peacock, and Prout," are genially and discriminately discussed in Art. III., while in Art. IV. we have a valuable dissertation on "The Philosophy of Aristotle," by a very able and independent thinker. "The English Pulpit" is considered in Art. V., an instructive and interesting paper, worth pondering by all preachers, but the subject is too large to be sufficiently handled, perhaps, in the space at command. And we observe that it is chiefly the Church of England pulpit that is noticed, while a slight reference to "the Baptist Spurgeon" is all the notice the present Nonconformist preachers are honoured with. Considering that preaching is *the* one thing with Nonconformists, while Churchmen rely mainly on the "Services," and that the average of the preaching among Dissenters is, for all the purposes contemplated by the pulpit, on a higher level than that complained of in the case of so many of the clergy, more especially of the curate class, we think this an oversight to be regretted. The VIIth Art. on "George Eliot's Novels," is, on the whole, the most discriminating and judicious review we have seen of this deservedly popular writer's works. Of course, we here and there differ a little from the reviewer, but we earnestly commend his impartial but fully appreciative and valuable criticism,

both artistic and moral, to our readers. On the two remaining Articles, "Meteorology," and "Keble and the Christian Year," we have no space for comment. The number is, as we have said, of great excellence and value.

The Church of the New Testament: Its Local Limits and Organization, &c. By R. F. WEYMOUTH, M.A. London: Elliot Stock. 1866. Price One Shilling.*

THIS is a thoughtful pamphlet by a writer who is evidently competent to discuss such subjects as are here treated of. We should always be glad to have Mr. Weymouth on our side in a controversy, or (the next best thing) if an opponent, we should have the pleasure of respecting him. With most of his statements we agree, but are utterly unable to accept his principle—(stated in answer to the question, "Whether we ought to consider Apostolic *precedent* equally binding on us with Apostolic *precept*?")—"that principle and precept, as left for our guidance, stand on precisely the same footing; that notwithstanding the diversity of form, there is absolutely no essential difference between them." Note A, p. 49. It is true, however, that the clause "as left for our guidance" is not only a qualifying one, but a very largely qualifying one, and *may* comprehend all that we should demur to in the statement of the principle, thus leaving open many questions. Three things especially weigh with us in studying the arrangements made by the Apostles, or made in Apostolic times, viz.:—First,—That what the Apostles did, they did for reasons which made it desirable so to do; and that the desirableness of the same sort of things in subsequent ages must greatly depend on the continuance of the same reasons for so doing. Some things they did were obviously of a temporary character; and we want a principle for our guidance in distinguishing between the temporary and the permanent. Whenever the reason for any particular arrangement or form ceases, the desirableness of the arrangement or form also ceases. Secondly,—The Spirit given to the Church in the early days was intended as a permanent gift to the Church, and ought to be believed in as still present in undiminished energy if only we will be equally receptive. And, Thirdly,—The almost purely spiritual character of the Christian economy leaves a large freedom to individuals and bodies, so long as they lovingly observe the principles (not precise rules) that are happily given for our permanent guidance. But these are matters we hope ere long to discuss in the pages of the CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR. If the Development theory of Romanists is most pernicious in one direction, the slavish adherence to the chapter-and-verse system on the other hand, which hitherto has tended chiefly to multiply divisions, and to—not so much *preserve* the Spirit in the letter, as—*bury* the Spirit under it altogether, has to be guarded against also. We are glad that Mr. Weymouth lays stress on the fact that in primitive times all the Christians in one town or city constituted one Church. And we believe that the sin of schism is chargeable on those who make it impossible now.

* If publishers who send us books for review would put the price, we should be happy to add that item of not unimportant information for our readers.

THE
CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR.

NOVEMBER, 1866.

THE ROUND TABLE.

CHAPTER XII.

CRITICAL—DOCTOR SMITH'S ADVICE TAKEN—MR. SYDNEY'S COMMUNICATION—THE LAST OF MR. KIERNEY—GAUNT HOUSE—THE WISH TO DEPART.

THE precious life trembled in the balance. A feather's weight, Doctor Smith said, might turn the scale. But, still, from the life-long habits of the patient, and the perfect composure of his mind, which added so much to the chances of recovery, the physician felt encouraged in the warfare he was waging against Death. And yet the hope that was indulged in to-day was dissipated to-morrow; and then the fears which renewedly chilled their hearts were once more dispelled again; and thus the anxious attendants in that sick chamber were kept for days and even weeks in a state of most painful suspense. But in the last week of October Mr. Langston was able to leave his bed and sit up for an hour or two in an easy chair, and though he looked but the ghost of his former self Edith's eye brightened at the sight of her dear father thus far on the way to convalescence; and her step which had been growing weary and heavy was once more the step of a young girl whose heart was beginning again to bound with hope. Mr. Sydney insisted on her going for a ride (the first time for more than a month that she had left the house), and he arranged with the Captain to take her for a good long drive. He would be Edith's representative in the sick chamber, he said, for it was time now he thought for Doctor Sydney

to try what he could do for the restoration of the patient. So the two went. The day was one of those fine warm but bracing days we sometimes get in the later autumn; and the freshness of the air, and the rich hues of the foliage, and the glorious play of light and shadow over the fields as the fleecy clouds chased one another across the blue sky, and the song of the lark as he soared and sung, and the thousand other sights and sounds of happy nature, and, above all, the joyous belief that her dear father was now on the way to convalescence, wrought like magic on the young girl, whose place for more than a month had been in the sick chamber. And she returned to the house, after more than two hours' absence, with freshness on her pale cheek and music in her voice. Her father, when she stooped to kiss him, sitting feebly in the easy chair propped up by pillows, pressed her to his heart with deep emotion; and some imagined peculiarity in his manner made her bend her eyes inquiringly, or at least studiously, on his face, where she thought she detected the faint play of some not unpleasant thought which had not been there when she kissed her good-bye to him for her ride. Mr. Sydney too seemed in a state of sub-intelligence with her father about something, and there was a deeper tone of calm and quiet tenderness about him in speaking both to him and to herself. Still, it was very slight, almost too slight to be perceptible; and yet there was, I suppose, a something which seemed to say that one heart had been opening to another. For one thing, as it soon appeared, Mr. Sydney had been able by some means, and apparently even without much trouble, to procure his friend's consent to a relinquishment of his pastoral charge. Mr. Langston confessed that all his own convictions tended to that point, and that his conscience now was fully at rest about it, but that he did not dare to allow his feelings to dwell upon it. And, utterly unequal to the task of writing, or even dictating ever so short a letter, he authorized Mr. Sydney to communicate the decision.

"I dare not think of it more, now," Mr. Langston had said; "or the consequences, I feel, may be serious. It is quite enough to let the judgment speak; and affection must wait before it can be indulged. But write kindly—write very, very kindly," he added. But his voice began to falter, and Mr. Sydney refused to allow another word. As soon as Edith was ready to resume her post in the sick chamber, Mr. Sydney lost no time in acting on the permission he had received. But he would not address himself to Mr. Kierney, for whom he felt nothing but an indignant contempt, not unnatural in a noble-spirited young man, but which perhaps needed to be somewhat controlled. He wrote a note therefore to Mr. Grosvenor, a gentleman whom he could respect, and whom therefore it was easy to address kindly,

begging him to inform his brother deacons and the Church that Mr. Langston, acting under the decided and urgent advice of Doctor Smith, was compelled to resign his office as their minister; and adding that he would himself address the Church in a letter as soon as his health would permit.

This is not a history of the Church at Bablyk-Hythe, and therefore we need not narrate the proceedings which followed. Our concern at present is with the inmates of The Gables. One thing only I report. When Mr. Kierney learnt that "the resignation" was actually sent in, he chuckled over it in his own quiet thin-lipped way, glad enough that now at last he should be rid of a man in whose presence he had never felt at ease. Somehow, when he was with Mr. Langston, whether alone, or in company with other members of the Church, at a deacons' meeting, or even at the public services, the mere presence and especially the eye of the minister seemed to reduce the value of everything that he prided himself on. His very money was a poorer thing; at least fifty per cent. poorer; nay, sometimes it seemed little better than a golden vanity. Yet his money was the main thing he had to depend on for respect among men. And then his religious talk too, his talk even about "the interest," and about "souls," and "the spiritual prosperity of this little hill of Zion," seemed somehow to be almost to his own consciousness little more than mere talk, the talk of the lips only. And if in sermon or prayer or conversation there was any allusion to the idleness of a mere profession of religion, or to hypocrisy, or if the Pharisees were mentioned, he always felt uncomfortable, and said within himself, "That's me." This of course was not pleasant. That comfortable self-satisfaction, which is worth so much, Mr. Kierney had long felt he should never have so long as he was liable to have Mr. Langston's eye rest on him. Great was his relief therefore when he found that all his little plans were no longer to be in vain. He felt he could breathe now. And he could preside at prayer-meetings, or "give out the hymns," or, as the man of chief importance in the place, take the chair at future Church-meetings, in peace and comfort. It would be like sitting, as he called it indeed, "under his own vine and fig tree, none daring to make him afraid."

Closeted with Mr. Croskill, the lawyer's clerk, and with Mr. Buzziman and Clack and Bowser, he said, rubbing his hands cheerily—

"Well, we've got a clear course now, at last; and we'll just please ourselves. And precious good care I'll take that we never have another Langston any more. That old Wesley was right when he said a minister should no more be a gentleman

than he should be a dancing master. I hate your gentlemen, I do." And he meant gentleman in the true sense too. For as the mere equivalent of a rich man he claimed to be a gentleman himself, and signed "gentleman" after his name in legal documents. He understood what was meant by the term when used discriminatingly, as significant of good breeding, culture, refinement, high principle, courtesy, self-unconsciousness, and the like, and he would have liked the epithet to be used exclusively for rich men. And Mr. Langston was not a rich man. "He had not more than a hundred a year of private property, if so much," and Mr. Kierney felt mortified that Mr. Langston had always borne himself like a gentleman, and somehow was sure to be treated as one in all companies. "*He* a gentleman!" he had been often heard to say; "He! a man with no more than a hundred a year of his own! Pshaw! I've no patience with such gentlemen." He took credit to himself for this letter of resignation. "I don't mind saying now," he said, "that if it had not been for me we might have been burdened with Langston nobody knows how long. But now he's not like to die I don't mind saying, in confidence, mind, that it was something I said to him in the vestry that Sunday morning that did the job. I knew I could cut him to the quick. And I did, too. But, 'pon my soul, I was rather frightened when he was taken with those spasms. And I have never said a word about it to any body before, but somehow I have let it out now."

But I have no heart for reporting more. We'll take our leave of Mr. Kierney now, for good and all as they say. Only the prospect for the Church at Bablyk-Hythe cannot be regarded as very full of promise. And yet under Mr. Kierney's management, they may make a splash, and get gratifying paragraphs in the denominational newspapers; and if they are zealous for the denominational objects that are dear to officials, they may get well spoken of at head-quarters, and Kierney may be "a good fellow after all." Who knows? The like of it has been.

When Mr. Sydney, after an hour's absence from the room, returned, and briefly reported that he had sent the note to the deacons (an announcement which he made in a very cheerful tone) Mr. Langston turned suddenly pale. The lips wore an ashy hue, and he fell back in his chair fainting. Neither the physician who had counselled the decision, nor Mr. Sydney who had successfully urged it, could enter into the feelings of a man who for some thirty years had had his brain and heart and soul wholly taken up with care for that people. They had been his study by day and by night. Their needs were never absent from his thoughts. What instruction they required, what topics

would be most helpful to them, what cautions were necessary, what encouragement and comfort; how he could most effectually correct this fault, heal that wound, check one man, soothe another, ward off this danger, prevent that root of bitterness from springing up, win one and another to holy decision, guard others from evils they did not even suspect, and fifty other things which make the catalogue of a pastor's solitudes; and, for the most part, do all this, and all else, not formally, nor too obviously, but as far as possible imperceptibly—his real aim often not being even suspected, and he himself constantly enduring all sorts of misapprehensions and misrepresentations from those who could take none but superficial and popular, and often false and pernicious, views of what was right and desirable for a minister to do;—I say, a thousand things which every faithful far-sighted minister will at once recognize, and which no other man can possibly enter into, or even guess at, came over the sick man in one mighty flood of remembrance, and overpowered him. It was as great a wrench, though of a different kind, of course, as when he had been called to surrender "the desire of his eyes at a stroke." Mr. Langston loved his people, as we always love those whom we really seek to serve and bless, and for whom we habitually make sacrifices, though he never made any parade of his tender regard. He was not a man to use the favourite pulpit terms of endearment. He had never called them "my beloved," but they were his beloved for all that; and he knew that the Master knew how earnestly he cared for them, even when some of the very objects of his constant solicitude gave him little credit for it, or even expressed their rough and ready notions that Mr. Langston was greatly "wanting in care for souls," and "not nearly so friendly and chatty as some other ministers." Some men affect a frankness and a friendliness they do not feel. They can call anybody "my dear brother," or any congregation, even the first time of addressing them, "my beloved." And it takes with a class. But Mr. Langston had no sympathy with that sort of thing. And sometimes he feared that temptations to pulpit insincerities and affectations of various kinds were not always resisted and refused as they ought to be. And many a man that he often and earnestly prayed for in his closet, he gave perhaps no particularly hearty greeting to if he met him in the street, simply because, knowing the man only too well, the appearance of cordiality and approbation would have been an insincerity that might have even done harm to the individual, and would certainly have done harm to his own soul. A certain reserve in some cases he felt to be called for in very faithfulness and love. And the numerous temptations to little insincerities in intercourse with his

people, he felt to be one of those things which make the life of a minister, one of peculiar peril. But Mr. Langston loved his people, and devoted his life, in the truest and deepest sense, to their welfare. And the sudden realization that now the spiritual bond of thirty years was actually broken, was too much for his enfeebled condition; and a faintness came over him which seemed every moment to deepen and deepen till it was a question whether life itself had not after all flickeringly died out.

It was again some weeks before the sick man reached the point of progress toward convalescence, which on that morning had so rejoiced the poor daughter's heart. But as November began to wane, he began to revive once more, and the physician was exceedingly anxious that he should be removed. The weather was as mild, notwithstanding the lateness of the season, as it had been in any part of the autumn. The elms had not parted with all their yellow leaves yet, though they came softly falling down in showers of gold at every breeze. And Doctor Smith thought that with great care he might be got to some pleasant sea-side spot on the south coast, perhaps the Isle of Wight; and then, after a few weeks, if he could take advantage of settled weather and a possibly calm sea, he might be able to get to Jersey for a few months. But at all events he was anxious for a thorough change of scene for him.

"And never let him return," said he. "At least not for a long, long time. His life is very precious to his poor child, and he may now get a renewed lease of it—with care; but I will not answer for the consequences if you do not get him away, and keep him away, too."

Mr. Sydney was naturally very wishful that his friend should go first of all to Gaunt House, where he could have all the quiet that was desirable, and be free from the inconvenience of hotels or lodging-houses, and where he was sure, under the circumstances, there would be more than enough to excite his interest and pleasantly engage his attention. So Doctor Smith consented, but still recommended that after a week or two there the original plan should be carried out.

Mr. Langston succeeded to some extent in the resolve that prudence dictated to postpone allowing his feelings to dwell on the idea of severance from his flock till such time as he should be able by renewed health to think about it without prejudice. But it was not easy, and every day made his friends more anxious to have him with them amid other scenes. Doctor Smith had spoken to Mr. Sydney about The Gables, and had offered himself as a purchaser. He would give a thousand pounds for it, or eleven hundred, or whatever sum any valuer possessing their

mutual confidence might fix as its value. And Mr. Langston gave a *carte blanche* to his friend to act for him in all things. But final arrangements, of course, could not be made so suddenly. The one thing of importance was to remove the invalid, and this at last was all planned. How they should travel, by what stages, what should be their halting places, everything was fixed, and the day of departure named.

"Edith, my child," said Mr. Sydney to her one day while they were in the midst of all the necessary consultations and planings; "Edith, would it not be pleasant for you to have some one of your young lady friends with you as a companion? I have been thinking you would like it."

"Oh, I should like it so much," she answered joyously.

"Well, anyone you like; or, half-a-dozen, if you please. Gaunt House is large enough."

"If Mr. and Mrs. Llewellyn would let Lilli go with me, I should like it above all things. She is such a dear girl, you don't know. Everybody loves her."

"Llewellyn!" said Mr. Sydney, "are they Welsh, then? But her christian name is not Welsh at any rate."

"Oh, yes, they are Welsh; at least Mr. Llewellyn is; but Lilli seems to me to have everything that is best of Welsh and Irish and English in her."

"Ah, then, she wants a little of the Scotch, I fancy."

"No, no; Lilli wants nothing that is not in her, I assure you. Oh, you will like her so, I am sure."

"And she can trace her genealogy back to Noah, of course;" said the gentleman laughing.

"I don't know about Noah, but she says they do trace back to King Arthur, and that they can make out a relationship to the Queen herself."

"Oh, to be sure they can," said her friend. "Well, Edith, then try by all means and get—what do you call her? Lilli? as your *compagnon de voyage*. But will Papa like her, think you?"

"Papa! Oh, she's one of his 'good girls,' you know. He loves her almost as if she were his own child."

And so it was arranged, and the day of departure was fixed, and all the plans were made, and the morning came when Mr. Langston was to be taken from the house to which thirty years before he had brought his bride. And Edith and Mr. Sydney and the Captain were chiefly solicitous that the leaving the dear old home should be so managed, if possible, as not to call out any great amount of feeling. And two or three little devices that affection prompted for securing this were pretty successful, and the weather was favourable, and the gentlemen of the party

were in high spirits, and Edith was calmly glad, and Lilli overflowed with delight, and so the carriage bowled away farther and farther from the town till one familiar feature after another had disappeared, and the novelty of the new scenery was an added element of tranquillity. But before that, when they had reached the point whence the last look could be obtained, Mr. Langston had stopped the carriage, and turned and fixed his gaze on the spot where so large a portion of his life had been passed, where there were such sacred graves, and where so many lived whom he had so long borne in his heart, till, sinking back in the seat, he faintly said, "The bitterness of death is past;" and was once more in danger of being overcome by his emotions.

Early in the afternoon of the second day they reached Eialip. And Mr. Sydney may be pardoned if now he felt more than he had heretofore the value of the property he had come into possession of, and about which at first he had appeared somewhat strangely indifferent perhaps. Every minute was full of new revelations, as they drove through the half woodland half shrubbery that led to the house. And when the carriage stopped, and the eye at a glance took in the chief features of the extensive range of buildings and the scenery around, as the early December sun, fast sinking to the west, made the windows burnished gold, and glorified the masses of foliage that abounded everywhere, surprise and delight filled every bosom. Lilli was in raptures. Edith was full of deep quiet joy, for her father seemed even better at the close of the journey than at the beginning. Change of scene and thought, and the fresh air, and a thousand other things, had all concurred to invigorate the dear invalid. And now, at last, to be safely and comfortably brought to his journey's end, and to see with his own eyes the beautiful home of his more than friend, and to feel how much there was in Gaunt House that would engage and interest him, and the happy tone of all the party, did really justify his friend's pleasant boast that "Doctor Sydney was a very successful physician."

And the days passed with strange but pleasant smoothness. Mr. Langston's health seemed to improve almost hourly. And the old house itself promised to furnish almost inexhaustible interest. He could linger for hours in the old baronial hall, in the quaint galleries, with their antique mementoes and strange portraits, or look from the windows on to the scene that lay beneath; and in a few days he could drive himself about the grounds in a little pony carriage, and before long could walk without needing the friendly arm, and found it pleasant often to saunter about alone in the brief sunshine of a clear December day; and felt in himself the assurance that life was getting invigorated, and that he should be spared to those that loved him, and that

it was not altogether unreasonable to hope that he might yet be equal to some good work in the service that had his heart. And then his thoughts would go back to the scenes of his life-long ministry; and the troubles he had had with some of his people, looked at now as they lay altogether in the past, did not appear so grievous as they had done at the time; and the individuals who had made themselves offensive, now that they could never wrong him more, did not seem so very bad, and he surrounded them in thought with an atmosphere of his own large-hearted charity, and he grew to mention their names in a tone of kindness that was almost tender. How then did the rest of his flock appear to him, those who had suffered him to seek their truest welfare in his own way and according to his own judgment, not only without let or hindrance, but with confidence and gratitude and love? They were dearer than ever to his heart. Pray God send them a wise and faithful and loving pastor, who should be able to do for them a thousand-fold more than he had done! Oh, that the dangers which threatened them might be averted, and the evils which existed among them be removed! Such was his prayer a score of times in every day, while one and another and another of his former flock, and some very especially, were constantly in his mind and heart.

One morning as the year was waning to its close, and Doctor Smith had written to urge the carrying out of the original plan, the Captain started for Jersey to make all desirable arrangements before-hand for the party to proceed thither. It was a lovely day, more like a day in spring than in December, and Mr. Sydney proposed a walk, to show them some particular points whence the prospect was exceedingly beautiful. But Miss Llewellyn was obliged to answer a letter she had just received from home, she said; and Mr. Langston had in his own mind devoted that very morning to writing the promised letter to his people, and begged to be allowed to carry out his design while he felt equal to the task and quite in the spirit for it.

"Come, then, Edith," Mr. Sydney said; "you and I must be one another's company it seems, unless you too prefer to stay in-doors. But, see, how beautiful everything is looking. Positively it is a duty to enjoy the glory which fills the earth, the air, the sky. Will you go?"

"With all my heart," answered the now happy girl. Happy, for all anxiety about her father had left her heart free to enjoy for the time the thorough change of life which the last few weeks had brought. The future did not trouble her; the past even stood in a mild subdued haze of light, while the present was purely enjoyable.

"With all my heart," she said; but added, "I do wish you

could go too, Lilli, dear. Can't you write your letter when we return?"

"Not this morning," was the answer; "I fear there would not be time afterwards before the post went out."

So the two went off by themselves, and the enjoyment of Edith seemed to grow with the passing of the minutes. The ground was hard beneath their feet, the air was delightfully exhilarating, the blackbird and thrush sang in the bushes and clusters of copsewood, and they wandered on and on, admiring everything; and Edith unrestrainedly gave expression to the joy of the hour. And yet the farther they walked the quieter Mr. Sydney grew, and now and then he seemed to be even absent. His thoughts were elsewhere perhaps. Perhaps he was thinking of what might have been—what would have been—if "The Mayflower" had been spared. And he talked about her, and Edith was glad that he should. "The Mayflower" was one whom Edith was never weary of talking about. She had been such a favourite at The Gables, where she had often spent several months together, and was regarded almost as a sister by the young people, and as a daughter by the parents.

"Yes;" said Mr. Sydney, with a gentle sigh, more pensive than sad, however, and with nothing of the painful in it; "Yes, Marian would have enjoyed all this after the changes she too had experienced in life."

And then there was a pause, and the two walked on for some moments in silence. They had reached the end of their excursion, and had turned again towards the house.

"But it was not to be," he added presently. "And the dear God is the best disposer of our lot. It must be so. He can have no motive in the discipline He puts us through but what is honourable to His heart as well as His judgment. And I never repine now, Edith, though I confess at first I was rebellious, and for long I chafed under the severe disappointment of all my pleasant hopes."

"I am sure," replied the young girl, "that God is love. My dear father is to me such a revelation of what God must be. I am so glad that we are all allowed to call Him FATHER."

"Tis a blessed title, I dare say;" said Sydney. "But I never had a father, you know, in any worthy sense of the word."

"Oh," rejoined she, "the name of father is the happiest, the fullest, the most glorious of any that the relationships of life afford, I am sure."

"Why, Edith," he replied with a smile, "how many of the relationships of life have you known? Your experience is somewhat too limited, I fancy, for you to be an authority as to all. *N'est ce pas, ma chère amie?*"

"Oh, dear, no; not 'limited,' I assure you. I am a daughter, and I have had such parents ——" she sighed, "and I have been"—she hesitated a little—"a sister." And again the poor girl sighed.

"Well, Edith, the catalogue of human relationships is not exhausted by your experience, either."

"No," said she, with an easy unthoughtful manner; "but I adhere to my word about the blessedness of the name of father; and of course I am thinking of it as including—as meaning—parent"—she added in a low voice, as the image of her mother was present to her memory.

"But God condescends to take other titles drawn from other human relationships, you know, Edith. And I should not wonder if some devout people, holy women, I mean, found as much that was tender, and strong, and gracious, and every way helpful, in another appellation, that we find in the Hebrew Scriptures, at all events."

"I don't know what you allude to;" she answered, speaking as frankly as childhood itself could. "God takes so many titles in the Scriptures, and they must all be significant in their turn, I suppose."

A smile played gently about the lips of the gentleman, and passed into his eyes, where it seemed to linger for a while after the lips had relinquished it. And again they walked on for a few moments in silence. But presently Mr. Sydney adverted again to "The Mayflower."

"How beautifully unselfish she was, Edith!"

"Perfectly unselfish;" was the rejoinder.

"Do you know, Edith, you seem to me very much like her;" he said.

"I! Oh, no, Mr. Sydney! Marian was so good, so lovely;—Oh, no, I am far, very far, from being like her."

"Even Marian could not have been a better daughter than you are to your dear father;" replied he.

"Oh! I should be sorry if I thought I had been wanting in anything to such a dear precious father as mine, Mr. Sydney. It is easy to be a good daughter to him."

"Well, Edith," he replied, after a pause, "you are really so much like her that I seldom think of her without thinking of you. And I could at times almost fancy that her spirit had passed into you—of course, I don't mean exactly literally. But I think Marian, if she could and might, would earnestly breathe into you all that made her so dear to me."

Edith did not reply to this, for she scarcely knew what the speaker meant. But as he seemed to be waiting for her rejoinder, she presently said;—

"Oh, I am so glad you are in England again, and not likely to leave us again for so long."

"But where do you think your father will settle when his health is established? He will want to be at work, you know. And Bablyk-Hythe is a thing of the past."

"I am sure I have no idea. I leave the future. I never think about it;" she answered.

"But you will have to think, Edith."

"Yes—I suppose so—sometime—" she replied. "But sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

"And where should you like your father to pitch his tent?" he asked.

"I am sure I don't know," was her reply. "I have not thought. God will guide him. And wherever he is it will be home to me. I leave all that."

"But what should you like, Edith?" he asked again.

"Oh, I never think now what I should like. That would be so idle. I don't know what I should like, and if I did it might not be the best, and then God would not give it, you know. No, I never trouble about that now."

"How should you like to live here, Edith?"

"Oh, this is very beautiful, and Eislip is a pretty village. If father were to take a cottage, and could by-and-by find work to do, I could enjoy to settle at Eislip." "And then," she added presently, "we should be so near to you."

"And would that be so pleasant, Edith?" he inquired in an unusually kind tone, and looking tenderly in her face. And he read there nothing but the charming frankness and clear souled purity which are such a charm, if the daughters of Eve could be persuaded to believe it.

"Of course, it would;" she said innocently; "the pleasantest thing that could be, if it were so ordered."

Another pause. And then Mr. Sydney said:—

"I love you, Edith."

"I know it;" was the young girl's reply.

"And you love me, Edith?"

"Of course, I do. I always have, you know."

He looked at her. And she, without the slightest trace of confusion or hesitancy, looked at him, as she had ever done. In many of her sex it would have been a most consummate piece of acting, he thought, but not with her. That was evident enough. In what purer than Diana realms had her imagination or fancy alone dwelt, that such a conversation, such an avowal and inquiry should have been met with so much naïve artlessness? Again there was a pause. And then—

"Edith, my dear," said he; "the morning that the Captain took you for a drive—do you remember it?"

"Perfectly."

"Well, I then opened my heart to your dear father, and received his permission to say something to you." And he paused—

"Well?" was the response presently, when she found that he had stopped abruptly.

"You see what a large measure of responsibility has been unexpectedly devolved on me in the acquisition of this estate with all that is involved in it. I must have some one to share it with me. Don't you see?"

"But the Captain is going to remain, is not he?"

"The Captain! Yes. But, Edith, I can't marry the Captain. The Captain cannot be my wife."

And at that notion, as soon as it was uttered, the young girl burst into a merry ringing laugh. And it was so odd a thought that he had thus negatively presented, and her innocent laugh was so joyous, that it proved contagious. But as deeper thoughts were in the man's heart, the contagion did not amount to an answering laugh, but only produced a happy smile, that spread however over all the countenance, and gave its tone to the remark with which he followed it up.

"When I said some one to share my duties and responsibilities, my dear, I meant some one to share my lot altogether, to love me, and be loved by me, through all our mutual life. Edith, darling, I meant a wife."

"Would not Lilli make a beautiful wife?" said Edith, still with perfect simplicity, and she launched out into the heartiest encomiums on her young friend to whom she gave ungrudging admiration.

"Nonsense, Edith. Lilli! I have set my heart on you. Will you be my wife, darling?"

It was as though an earthquake had yawned before her, or a whole pile of thunder clouds had burst within her soul. She stood still, frightened, and pale as death, and trembled in every limb, and would have fallen had he not caught her in his arms, and placed her on one of the rustic seats that were scattered here and there over the grounds.

"Edith, dear! Don't be frightened. I never dreamed that you could fail to understand me so. Forgive me, my love, if I have been too abrupt."

Still the young girl shook like an aspen tree. A great gulf had in one moment come between all her simple maidenly past and the unknown future.

The Mr. Sydney of her free, artless girlhood had vanished;—swallowed up, in a moment, in that strange gulf that seemed to

have opened right before her, and another Mr. Sydney was there, the same in figure, indeed, in appearance, and voice, and everything, and yet another. No longer the friend and brother, with whom she had been so free;—but transformed—and not yet transfigured—into a possible—husband! And for herself—that same moment had changed the girl, into a—woman. And all the relations of earth were in that instant changed and confused; and she knew nothing.

“Edith, dear, I won’t press you for an answer. I was wrong, very wrong, to have taken so much for granted. But now you know my feelings towards you, and we will let time solve the question. Will you forgive me for my abruptness? he asked, tenderly. But the increased tenderness of his tone and manner only added to the disturbance of that young bosom. And when she could speak, she said faintly, in a subdued voice, “Please, take me to my father.”

He put her hand in his arm that he might support her to the house, for the trembling, as if a cold chill had struck her, did not cease; and as she unevenly stepped along over the intervening space, she felt as if a strange distance separated her from her old friend, and yet as if a new nearness too were possible perhaps. She was as in a strange dream. A heavy night-mare weighed upon her heart. And would the terror ever change to something less formidable, to something bright even?

When she reached her father, she flung herself passionately into his arms and burst into tears; at the same time clinging to him, and kissing him, as if some one were seeking to tear her away from him. A glance at Sydney, who answered by a look of significance, told him that the crisis in his child’s life had that morning come. And then Sydney left the father and daughter to their own mutual confidings. She had no mother, into whose maternal heart she could pour all the strange and conflicting feelings of that totally unlooked-for hour; and Mr. Langston, from the time of his own terrible bereavement, had sometimes felt it was not quite easy to be both father and mother in one. But he gradually drew out all he needed to know in order that he might act accordingly. And, before that long and touching interview was over, he had acceded to the earnest wish of Edith to hasten their departure from Gaunt House. Instinctive maidenliness taught her what was best. Mr. Sydney could no longer be the brother she had till now taken him for, and she was utterly unprepared, in a moment, to change the old relation for a new one. The idea had never entered her mind, that the long-time fond and faithful lover of “The Mayflower” could ever wish for her to fill the vacuum that death had made. Whether other girls would have had a keener

eye for the possible—whether they ever allow an idle fancy to entertain proposals that have not been made, and yield up their maidenly imaginations to a chance crowd of pictured lovers, or instal some one chosen favourite in their hearts before their love is solicited, how should I know? I only know that, though possibly some of her sex not older than herself may smile half-pityingly at her utter surprise, she was as thoroughly confounded at the notion, when seriously put before her, as if she had been hailed Queen of England. And the fact was, Mr. Sydney, now that the fraternal, as she had hitherto felt it, had ceased, would have to win her heart as he might have had to win any other; though, of course, it is not to be concealed that he stood every chance of success, nor was it likely that the task would be a very hard one. She wished to leave Gaunt House, however, and felt she could not be at her ease again until she and her father were in another position than that which the issue of the morning's walk had made so strange. She felt painfully embarrassed at the prospect of meeting Mr. Sydney again, and begged that she might keep her chamber at all events for the remainder of the day.

The Captain returned earlier than was looked for. He had not been to Jersey. For at Southampton he had learned that there was no prospect of a smooth passage at that season, and from all he heard he feared it would be too rough for an invalid to venture. He therefore proposed the south coast of the Isle of Wight, either Sandown, or Shanklin, or Ventnor. And after a brief discussion this was agreed on. And it was a great relief to Edith when she found that Mr. Sydney had requested the Captain to take charge of the party; himself staying at Gaunt House for a while, but proposing to visit them as soon as Mr. Langston should inform him they had recovered from the fatigue of the journey, and were settled in a comfortable house, and felt ready to welcome him.

And soon the last afternoon they would pass at Gaunt House had come, and an air of pensiveness stole over the whole party, Miss Llewellyn alone excepted.

"Mr. Sydney," said she, in her lively way, "are you sure we have seen all that is worth seeing in this queer, delightful old house? Haven't you some haunted chamber? I am sure there ought to be one. Gaunt House! I declare I thought I saw a ghost last night, and it pointed with a finger dripping with blood to a sort of Bluebeard's den. Or else I dreamt it. Come, now, give me the key, Sir, and let me just peep into the terrible chamber. Gaunt House! Oh, I am all in a shiver."

"Well, young lady," answered the host, "now you speak of it, there is a room which I confess is a mystery to myself, and I

shall be delighted if Miss Llewellyn can make anything of it." He rang the bell, and requested the housekeeper to have the octagon chamber opened, and prepared for a visit presently.

"It is a room," he said, "which puzzles me to understand what it was built for. As you will see, it is connected with the main building only on one of its eight sides—that by a door in which, the only door too, we enter it. But you shall see; and I confess I would give a trifle for some clue to its meaning."

So presently the whole party proceeded to inspect it, the housekeeper and Mr. Sydney leading the way. Up the first broad staircase of polished oak, along one gallery, turning now to the right hand and descending a few steps, then to the left and ascending two or three, winding about hither and thither, so that a chart would have been needed by a stranger. At length the door was opened, and they stood in a large chamber, having, as we have said, eight sides. In each of the seven walls a mulioned window of old painted glass, except where portions had been broken, and repaired without regard to the original design. The stone roof was groined. A large old-fashioned hearth, and chimney-place, with the stone sides of it elaborately carved. But the chief feature of all was the huge solid oak table that occupied the centre. It was large enough for some eighteen or twenty men to sit at comfortably without elbowing each other. Unlike the long table in the old baronial hall, this was round. It was composed of various solid pieces most carefully fitted together, so that no join could be detected except on careful scrutiny. It was four or five inches in thickness, and was supported on a heavy frame-work in proportion. The housekeeper said there were different traditions about it. Some said it was brought over from the Holy Land by a Crusader. But this was absurd, for it must have been built in the room itself; that was evident, they all agreed. What could be the meaning of it? Who had built the chamber, and for what purpose? "I have it," said Miss Llewellyn; "why, it is the famous Round Table of my noble ancestor, to be sure, King Arthur. Ah, don't you see here is an odd-shaped L; and that stands for Lancelot, of course. And I should not wonder if you find a G, if you look, and then that will mark Sir Gawaine's place at the board."

"Oh, but," said Mr. Langston, "the Round Table of King Arthur was in the open air, if I remember rightly. And was it not of turf, too, with a circular seat of turf running round it? I fear the true solution is yet to seek."

"No, no, no; I can't have my theory put out of court in that fashion, Sir. I shall borrow a hint from my good countryman Fluellen—Captain Fluellen, I mean, Shakspeare's Fluellen, you know—and will undertake to prove this to be the identical

Round Table of King Arthur, quite as easily and as satisfactorily too as he proved the similarity of Monmouth and Macedon."

"There must be some clue to it, one would think," said Mr. Langston, "in some old history of the county, or other. Or, perhaps, there may be old writings lurking unsuspected in out-of-the-way chests in closets or corners overlooked."

"I think I must invite the Archæological Society to pay us a visit, some day," said Mr. Sydney. "But I must wait till I am in a position to receive company, especially such a distinguished body. Eh, Edith?" And he looked at her with pleasant meaning in his voice and manner; but Edith blushed, and was silent.

The next morning the party, with the exception of Mr. Sydney, took leave of Gaunt House for Southampton, which they hoped to reach the same night, and the day following they would cross over to the island. A few days more, and they were comfortably settled in a furnished house for the winter, and began to call it "home;" and then soon they began to find their way about Ventnor, and Bonchurch, and the Undercliff, and had even extended their little excursions as far on the other side as Niton and Blackgang. And every day saw Mr. Langston's health improving. And Edith's pale cheeks, too, gained something of colour, and her eye was full of a deep, deep consciousness that was altogether new, and quite a new loveliness spread over the countenance, and one which evidently was the working of the soul within. One would have fancied the dawn of a new life in her.

The Captain had returned to his friend.

"Well, Edith," said her father one day, about three weeks or rather more after they had settled at Ventnor, "Mr. Sydney wants to know when we can welcome him at Myrtle Cottage?"

"When you please, Papa, dear," was the answer with a smile.

(To be concluded in our next.)

THE SLAUGHTER AT THE BROOK KISHON.

Few things more strikingly show the wonderful difference between the tone of the present day and that of the ages before Christ ("B.C.") than the effect often produced on the modern mind by such narratives as that recorded of the prophet Elijah, in 1, Kings, xviii. 40.

There are those amongst us who read with a shudder, with a thrill of horror even, of the way in which he thus improved the temporary revival of faith he had effected among the cowed and disheartened people of Israel on the famous day of Carmel, namely—by the slaughter of the prophets of Baal. We wonder that a servant of the true God should have been so sanguinary, so pitiless, that he should so remorselessly have steeled his heart against all merciful considerations. It seems such a strange mingling of piety and savageism, of prayer and butchery, that the great doer of the deed almost stands before us at that moment as one of those wild and gloomy fanatics who ever and anon appear in history, like a portentous meteor streaming across a troubled sky. The killing of four hundred and fifty prophets, in cold blood, seems an awful finale to the otherwise noble chivalry of the day; an almost unredeemable blot upon its glory; an act of frenzied revenge, unworthy of the prophet of the true God, and by which religion itself is dishonoured.

That many of the younger and less fully instructed readers of the Old Testament are conscious of such feelings, as they read such narratives, we know full well. And that this and similar records are not unfrequently now-a-days severely commented on, and even offensively, by persons not friendly to the Bible, in a spirit that affects something very like ultra-humane regard for evil-doers is notorious also. For our own part we go with Elijah.

We have recognized that the times are different. Yes, truly; but what has made them so? We submit very briefly two or three suggestions.

It is, speaking now quite generally, the sterner rugged work of preceding generations that has, to a large extent, rendered possible the milder, gentler, more humane tone of modern society. And this ought never to be forgotten, though it often is. Precisely because other men, long before us, shrunk from none of the sterner necessities they felt to be imposed on them, is it possible for us to dwell in quiet resting-places, and nurse a gentleness that at times degenerates into feebleness. Why, as to English liberties even—and which may serve as an illustration—who supposes that we should be as it is our blessed privilege to be at this day, if in the days gone by there had not been strong champions that bore the brunt of most unequal battle, that drew back before no danger however appalling, from no duty however perilous? Men who were ready to pine away in dungeons, to shed their blood on the scaffold, or die at the torturing stake, in loyalty to either religious truth or patriotic principles; or, if the unscrupulous abettors of tyranny fell into their hands, without

scruple rid the country of them by the sharp axe. English history teaches us that a nation's liberties may have to be bought with rivers of blood, with the blood of both the friends and the foes of freedom. War, to the bitter end, has more than once in our history been a terrible necessity if England was ever to become, as now, let us thank God it is—The Home of Freedom. And that contest in which Elijah was engaged was war, as to the essential character of it; war, by the feeble against the strong, by the oppressed and persecuted against the bloody persecutor and oppressor, by the native and the patriot against the remorseless foreigner.

Then, Christianity itself—which the unfriendly impugnors of the Old Testament like no better than they do the character of the prophets of an earlier time—Christianity itself is mainly the cause of our regarding such a record with horror.

The Jewish system was not the first form of religion in the world (the mild and free patriarchal form was before it) nor was it intended to be either universal or final. It was avowedly temporary, something interposed, (partly because of the character of the times all the world over) between an easier past and a more glorious future. But it was incomparably better than all else that was extant in any country—incalculably better. It taught the unity of God, and the righteousness of God, and the holiness and goodness of God. It inculcated truth, and purity, and righteousness; and it was the only religion that did. In the midst of reigning and consummate falsehood in every temple, and among every priesthood in the world, it insisted peremptorily on truth. While the grossest licentiousness was sanctioned and adopted into various religious rites, it as peremptorily insisted on purity to the uttermost. When the many gods of the nations were but the projections of the awfully corrupt minds of men, it proclaimed the one God whose name was holy and whose throne was righteous. But yet its chief use and design in the world was as the appointed cradle of a better faith, the cultivated garden—like an oasis in a desert—in which was to be planted, and to grow up, the Tree of Life for the healing, ultimately, of the nations. And was not such a system worth guarding at any price?

And when Christ came, and some of his disciples wanted to call down fire from heaven to consume the hostile, alleging the example of this very Elijah, He rebuked them, we are told saying, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of!" and added, "The Son of Man is come not to destroy men's lives, but to save them." The work of former ages was done. By reason of what had been, something far nobler, better every way, and

diviner, could now be. But "the way" had to be "prepared." And Christ would make a glorious future, but without throwing doubt or scorn upon the past.

If there never had been such a thing as Christianity, we, supposing we had ever lived (which may admit of question) should never have been shocked at the story of the slaughter of the prophets of Baal. Had we been either idolaters or atheists—and what else could we have been?—we should have felt no horror at the record, or even at the sight, of deeds however terrible. Ample proofs of this might be adduced. Nay, we might go further, and say, were it not for Protestantism we should never have dreamed of affecting any repugnance to such a tragedy. No thorough-going Roman Catholic is shocked at it now.

We of this day, too, are not uncommonly wanting in some of the stronger elements of character. Ease, enjoyment, pleasure,—these are our idols, our gods; self-indulgence,—this is our *cultus*. Till the Crimean war and the Indian mutiny roused us out of our almost Sybarite effeminacy—and we positively seemed on our way to the supreme stage of sensitiveness, that in which we might "die of a rose in aromatic pain"—we shrunk from inflicting pain on even the vilest criminals. And this, not so much out of a grand and godlike pity for them, as out of the action of a morbid imagination which made us put ourselves in their place, and as we knew how sensitively we should shrink from pain ourselves, however we might deserve it, so, in unsuspected sympathy with our own flesh under the imagined lash—(which we glorified with the name of philanthropy, forsooth!)—we shrinkingly protested against hurting any body. We would not hurt the poor garotter even, nor the poor misguided men that found their singular recreation in beating women, in kicking their very wives. Oh, no;—we would shut them up for a week or two, indeed, but even then we must tenderly see to their comfort. There was quite a mania for making things pleasant to criminals. The fact is we were more sympathetic with pain than with righteousness. Crime and wickedness did not wholesomely excite our indignation. We had no masculine hatred of it, but we had a more than feminine weakness at the thought of suffering, deliberately and judicially inflicted. The stern experiences of the events we have referred to, however, were blessed to the bracing of our nerves. And it is to be hoped that, instead of the maxim for our foreign relations, "Peace at any price," and for our home action, "Smoothness at any price," we shall learn to put first what God puts first, and say with all our hearts, "Righteousness at any price;" not shrinking from being the followers of Him who is

"*first* King of Righteousness, and *then* King of Peace." Melchizedek, Melchisalem. We have no scruple in affirming that it is not the noblest in man, but the poorest, that professes to be shocked at some of the stern deeds of the heroes of an earlier age.

And yet these remarks are but preliminary. And the question is not, whether, now, here, in Christian England, or indeed anywhere on earth to-day, it would be right to put to death some hundreds of idolatrous priests? There would be but one answer to that. And Elijah himself even would not have wished to harm a hair of the head of any priest of Baal out of Israel. We say "out of Israel," and we wish all those who affect such philanthropic horror at the deed would first of all try to understand it.

God had taken Israel out of all the rest of the nations of the earth, and made the people dwell alone, giving them a number of peculiar laws and ordinances, which, observed, must keep them most completely separate and distinct. And this not merely for their own sakes. No, truly not. They were the elect of nations. And God's election, whether of nations or individuals, is never solely for the sake of the elect themselves. God's love does not stop short and abruptly at the immediate object, but always contemplates others beyond. Thus God's election of Abraham looked far far beyond the individual patriarch himself, though the friend of God; and Moses was elect as much for the people's sake as his own; and even Christ himself is spoken of emphatically as "the elect;" but whether this was only for himself alone all the world can decide. So the people of Israel were "elect," not merely for their own sakes, but in love to the whole world, that in the fulness of the times He should come forth who was to be "a light to lighten the Gentiles" (the heathen)—the Redeemer of the world, "in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed," so that a glorious Gospel should be preached to every creature under heaven. This Jewish system, with its faith embedded therein, was a grand part of the preparatory means towards this blessed end.

But the faith got corrupted. Kings led the way. At length the corruption reached its climax—its *ne plus ultra*. The whole system which was preparatory to the better, the diviner, would have utterly perished and disappeared had not some decisive blow been struck. Ahab, who is pointed out by the historian as "that King Ahab," saw fit to marry a Zidonian princess, the daughter of the priest-king, who devoted himself to the propagation of Baalism in antagonism to Jehovahism. She was an imperious, fierce, and intolerant woman, who was bent on

substituting her own idolatrous worship in Israel for that of Israel's God. She brought a train of foreign prophet-priests with her, men devoted to the setting up of Baal's altars in the land on the ruins of the altars of Jehovah. And the cruel and licentious worship of Phœnician gods and goddesses desecrated the sacred soil of Israel. The worship of Jehovah was ruthlessly put down with a strong hand. A sweeping and bloody persecution began, and proceeded. Every one of the bolder professors of the old faith was butchered. Elijah, who fled hither and thither, never letting his hiding-place be known, believed himself the only one left alive in Israel of the faithful servants of God. All the rest had been laid in red graves, or their bones bleached, like those of the Alpine martyrs of a later day, on the hill-sides of Israel. Elijah knew of no brother-servant of the Most High God left in all the land. Jezebel and her crew had made short work of it. The land, so far as persecution could do it, was swept bare of religion, and made a moral desolation. Jezebel was in her glory. The four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of the Groves—those scenes of horrid debauchery—were all in all. They ate and they drank and they rioted at the queen's table.

We have said that it was war. And it was war—war between the pure and simple faith and a most accursed and murderous idolatry; and the prophet-priests and their royal mistress made it, on their side, war to the knife. The name of Claverhouse and his troopers never struck such a terror into Scotch Covenanters as the name of Jezebel and her tools into the hearts of the worshippers of Jehovah. The name of "Bloody Queen Mary" and Bishop Bonner never struck such terror into the hearts of English Protestants as the name of Jezebel and her crew of pampered and bloody priests into the hearts of Israelites. If there were a man anywhere who dared to speak for God, he had to flee for his life, and hide in the dens and caves of the earth. Elijah she sought to kill, but no one could find him. He too had to flee.

And shall nothing be done for the people? Shall all this vile oppression and tyranny and murder be suffered in silence, and no blow be struck? Or, if heaven shall raise up a champion, must he clothe himself in silken attire? Shall his garments smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia out of the ivory palaces? Shall he stand smiling and simpering like a courtier in the face of such a crisis? God raised up a MAN, and made his heart strong. That man—that patriot equal to the emergency—was Elijah. And when he entered the lists on the appointed and prepared ground, to engage in the strange conflict which Carmel witnessed—a single-handed combat, not like that even between

the stripling David and the huge bulky Philistine, but—Elijah alone, with no man that dared to say to encourage him, “Now God be with thee, Elijah!” alone, single-handed, with all the prophet-priests of Baal in their pride of place and strength on the other hand, to put him also to death with torture if they conquered,—one against a host;—when all that was holy, and all that was life to a whole nation, trembled in the balance—trembled, or seemed to tremble, for hours of awful suspense—and Elijah at last stood master of the field,—what more patriotic thing could he do? what more righteous thing could he do? what more judicially just and politically expedient? what more merciful thing for the whole people could he do—than just put those foreign and hireling murderers to death, and that right swiftly, thus making of them a terrible example?

Judging of the deed by the times and the circumstances, let us cease to be effeminately revolted at it; and let us take to our hearts the solemn truth that the Lord is a God of judgment, and that both in His providential government of this present world now, and in His threatened treatment of the incorrigibly wicked hereafter, He shows and will show that with Him the claims of righteousness are never waived, but are ever paramount. “*First RIGHTEOUSNESS.*”

But further still. This was a judicial act, prescribed by Jewish law, and done solemnly in the presence of the king, who, for the moment, bowed his head in acquiescence before the majesty of the law and its bold vindicator. Without our quoting it at length, let the reader turn to Deuteronomy xiii., and study the whole of it, particularly the first eleven verses, and remember that the law, of which this was part, was as much Israel's law and charter as Magna Charta and the Bill of Rights and the Petition of Rights are part of the bulwark of British freedom. And let him bear in mind that Ahab was bound by law (bound, as we might now say, by his coronation oath) to write out a copy of this very law with his own hand, that he might know it perfectly, and solemnly bound to enforce and execute it. He knew this well. And his guilty conscience made a coward of him, as he stood self-convicted of treasonable violation of the law, and put forth no hand, uttered no word of remonstrance, but looked on as Elijah, under his very eye, carried out, and did no more than carry out, the law which Ahab was bound to uphold, which Ahab himself ought to have executed.

THE BORDER REGION.

ALONG the verge of the sea, extending some distance inland, we generally find a strip of land, sometimes of considerable breadth, characterized by peculiarities both as to its vegetation and its animate life. It is a kind of neutral territory; not as yet good land, nor sufficiently "of the earth earthy" to be fit for the farmer's wheat ridges; yet repelling the sea and the sea-life. The briefest delineation of one such locality may serve as to its common features for all. Two great rock-promontories shut in a fine bay, into which two rivers uniting, pour their waters right under the north-eastern range of rocks. Between the bar of the river outlet and the south-western promontory stretches a flat piece of land bordering the restless waves, and containing about a thousand acres. Rich slopes rise from its southern side with a somewhat precipitous ascent into a range of rocky hills and heathy flats. Immediately on the verge of the sea you come upon sandy hummocks, with their scant covering of bent, displaying its long tough tangled roots along the sandy sides. A great ridge of rolled stones, smooth and rounded by ages of ceaseless tumbling and attrition in the deep which has flung them up there, beats back the waves along the further part of the coast line. To the north-east, where the river mingles with the tide, the place is marshy. Evidently the sea has not yet given up its hold there; but occasionally at high tides or impelled by tempestuous winds and tide together, rushes over the level land and submerges acres of it. There all is oozy. The vegetation is strangely muddled; sea and land in seeming contention. The sea has the best of it, however, and its own curious vegetation predominates. Yet curiously changed, as if it had too much of the sunshine, and could hardly bear it. Farther west, still close to the sea, you come upon the sea holly, and great masses of a species of euphorbia. Spreading itself out upon the hot glistening sand of the hillocks the charming pimpernel basks in the day, and holds you still, and hushed by its beauty; a beauty enhanced by the associations of the scene.

The pretty thrift shoots up gracefully, where here and there rocky boulders gather to them sea-weed and shells. Saltworts meet us everywhere. Sea lavender, sea-side convolvulus, and other plants, redolent of the brine, mark the peculiar habitat. Passing inward along the flat turfy stunted herbage, we are still reminded that we are in a region all anomalous. Plants meet our eye which are familiar to us, yet unfamiliar. We have met

them before in our walks far inland; but here they are all dwarfed, as if they were but the foreshadowings of the fuller life yet to be. Other blossoms look up to us of strange characteristics, hardly to be classified, puzzling the botanist, and asserting claims both to sea and land. The birds that flit past us are of the same character; not of the sea, yet never traced far inland; formed to wade or swim; strong of wing; peculiarly adapted to the shore. Slow, brackish streams loiter through the flats, and contain small fish just as curious as the vegetation. Cross the river, toward the north-east, and the peculiarities of the border flats are yet more marked. Extending miles inland, the low hummocks, crowned with bent, rise amid great glistening space of sand. A curious scene arrests us, and gives us a vivid idea of the prophet's description of the desolation of Babylon. From the crest of a sandy hillock, you look down upon a valley of white sand, rippled by the breeze, like a summer sea. Here and there, on low eminences, the sand has been drifted into the semblance of a snow-wreath. At our feet are great masses of the flowering rush. Every step we come upon some rare curious plant, found ever within hail of the tumbling surf, when found at all. Rabbits scud away among the maze of sandy hillocks. The scream of the sea-gull, the sharp sad call of the sea-pye, the echo of the heavy surf bursting on the beach, alone reach us. It is a curious scene this border region; and the researches of natural science make it still more peculiar, and unfold yet more of its relations and contrasts both with sea and land.

The physical world has been said to be the shadow of the spiritual. In many ways it is. Gazing on such a peculiar scene as that we have described, one is forcibly reminded of a strange anomalous region in the history of the spiritual convictions of man. Nay, we are aided by the very peculiarities of this neutral ground between sea and land; as we investigate its characteristics, we are helped to understand a little more the relation of that strange realm in man's spiritual convictions, where, as yet, we see but forecasts of a coming era, or strange mementoes of some indescribable past; where we hardly know whether to regard the speculations and beliefs which lie before us, as the heralds of the clearer, fuller revelation, or the dwarfed and vanishing representations of a world of thought and knowledge, and swept under by the inroad of some great and awful change; the ruins of a vast creation now perished and swallowed up in the restless surge. We purpose to illustrate this thought in the space which remains to us of this paper.

That there is such a region in the spiritual history of our race, most persons will readily acknowledge. When we extend our researches into the history of earth's old faiths, and gather

together the traces of religious conviction and the customs of religious worship still to be found amongst savage tribes, we quickly find ourselves amongst the peculiar characteristics of the border region of our spiritual world. Mother Earth, says the New Zealander, was once all but submerged. The beings who did this were—Terrible-rain, Long-continued-rain, Fierce-hail, Mist, Heavy-dew, Light-dew. Rain is here a personage, acting, doing a work of destruction. Here is one gleaning from that border region, not the most striking perhaps, but still sufficient. It has all the features of a time antecedent to the knowledge of natural laws, pervaded by a certain spirit of religiousness, and based on an almost intuitive recognition of the invisible world of supernatural powers, and its relation to the changes of the visible. There is in it also the recognition of that most ancient and universal of traditions—the tradition of the Deluge. In what land, amongst what people do we not find traces of it? Humboldt comes face to face with it in his far-reaching wanderings amongst strange races, and speculates upon it after his fashion. Amongst the civilized peoples of ancient days it exists as common property. In Hindu and Buddhist mythology; in the traditions of Central Asia; amongst the northern races in America; among the Polynesians; again and again in Grecian literature, in Hesiod, Pausanias, Æschylus, this huge ruin of some primal record arrests us with the inquiry as to its origin and the proportion of truth in it. It lies there on the great debateable region of man's spiritual convictions, shadowy, vast, historic, yet legendary—a fact, become a dogma of every religious creed and mythology. People find a difficulty in our Bible narrative. But the difficulty really is not to harmonize a partial deluge with Scripture language, or a universal deluge with the discoveries of natural science; but to harmonize a partial deluge with the general tradition—that is, the real crux.

To return a little. The other great element in our New Zealand myth is the personification of the elemental powers. The Rain is not a force wielded by some being; it is itself a personage. The further phase of this deifying of nature would be, when the elements and forces of nature are wielded by invisible beings. But even Grecian mythology displays in its earlier legends the simple New Zealand idea. The Prometheus of Æschylus opens with the binding of Prometheus by *Strength* and *Force*. In Homer, Sleep and Dream, Earth, are gods, as Jupiter is a god. Modern philology, represented by Grimm and Müller, goes back a step farther, and traces out for us another stage in the growth of such convictions, another phase in the history of man as a spiritual being. The old myths have a clear resem-

blance; clearer in proportion to their antiquity. Our comparative philologists have followed out this principle, and have tracked the oldest myths of the Greek, Sanscrit, Teutonic, Slavonic, back to one source. A great Aryan race appears as the *Ultima Thule* in the investigation. The myths appear first as simple poetical conceptions or expressions of natural phenomena. The intuitional convictions of man's mind, all the more absolute in a time of ignorance as to the causes of changes in the material world, and of its various appearances and evolutions, come in to impress on these conceptions and expressions a special import, and a myth begins its development. Historic incidents mingle with the future presentation of the myth; and its final phase, perhaps, involves a whole series of changes and additions, and some remarkable events in the history of a particular people. Thus, in that strange border realm of man's knowledge and spiritual cognitions, words have a peculiar significance, and take a mystic character. They are the earliest outgoings of the awakened consciousness of man as to a something beyond him, manifesting itself in the changes of the material universe, or perhaps the ruinous fragments of a conviction, and a knowledge once full and clear. When Cowper exclaims of Evening—

“Methinks I see thee in the streaky west
With matron step, slow moving, while the night
Treads on thy sweeping train; one hand employed
In letting fall the curtain of repose
On bird and beast, the other charged for man
With sweet oblivion of the cares of day.”

We call it a figure, and fine allegory. When Byron repeats—

“O Hesperus, thou bringest all good things.”

We are struck with the fine use of personification. But to the old time and the men of that dim border era, the name was simply an expression of a conviction and a conception of a natural event. By-and-by the conception solidified into a personage and Hesperus became a being, with influences extending over man's life. Such ideas of natural events and objects become finally, and are now, the only ideas which represent knowledge and religion among whole races of people.

The step which is taken when men looked at the elements not as themselves personalities but presided over by persons, gods, is a very simple, easy, yet a very marked and far reaching one. We can trace the transition in the religious convictions of many peoples. The most extraordinary part of the history of the North American Indians is the peculiarity, complication and

variety of their mythology. To them the universe is all animated. Every element has its spirit; winds have voices, trees speak, rivers are sentient and potent. Man himself is involved in this network of existence. It is curious to find a mythology so complicated, varied as the Grecian, among a people with hardly any organization and already vanishing away. Buddhism is pervaded by the same characteristics. The spirit from the tree addresses the worshipper in the "Manual of Buddhism." In Borneo, the spirit of the tree is the soul of man in that stage of its transformations. The Grecian mythology and the Hindu "systems" are the most wonderful depositories and developments of such legends. All Nature palpitates and thrills with an invisible spirit-life, the very soul of its functions and relations. Through the fays and fairies, ghosts and phantoms of our own day, we seem to link ourselves on to those strange weird conceptions of nature which grow up in that neutral territory where we first seem to behold man groping after the meaning and the spirit of natural changes. These are the mementoes to us of a whole system of religion, knowledge, philosophy; these fays that dance on the dewy sward, sleep in the lily's bell; weird and terrible in German legends; fantastic and sportive in Irish tales; immortal with Shakespeare's "Dream;" lingering traces of an old faith amid the mocking discoveries of our haughty modern science; neither of earth nor heaven, sea nor land, present nor past, they live on in our poesy, our nursery tales, our philosophic speculations, like curious flowers on some sea verge, beautiful but not of the solid land. A question will arise here: What is the solid earth? What is it which dispels the dreamy phantasy and elicits the imperishable truth? Modern Science says: I have dissipated these. I have searched the nature of the sun, the roll of the river, the flash of the lightning, the crash of the thunder, the sweep of the storm, the law of the storm, the nature of life, the path and the composition of the beam of light, the course of the stars, and the law which pervades in all the changing phenomena of Nature. The dream disappears. We stand on solid earth, awake and steadfast. The invariable sequences of Nature are our deities. It is a very doubtful claim. For behind all these old conceptions of natural phenomena lies the clear conviction of the invisible world, that world which we are so near, yet see not, hear not. The idea of the unseen lies beneath all these myths. Nay, often, through these myths, pervading them, we seem to catch the dim shadow of a great truth, the truth of a fallen immortal being contending against sin and misery and death; of a great warfare of good and evil in which we are mixed up; of a certain solemn inscrutable Providence speeding the blasting curse

against evil and protecting the good. Science has explained much ; but much remains. We cannot accept scientific deduction as our solid ground and true explanation of all. The residue after the scientific exposition is more important than all the rest. It is the very basis and ground of the whole religious fabric. You may explain that the lightning is not a spirit, and the dream not a God ; but you do not thus get rid of the idea implied in the myth of that something beyond ourselves, unseen, impalpable, yet powerful towards us ; which we cannot shun and must propitiate. One gets wearied of the claims of science to have exploded this and the other old dream or superstition. We cannot be dull to the splendid mission of Science. But when we are told that in the establishment of certain laws and exploration of certain phenomena we have swept away all the world of conjectures, speculations, convictions which lie on the shores of the dark ocean of man's early state, we demur. We see in them what sciences cannot sweep away ; and, if it could, it would only destroy its own surety. We read in them the witness of the spiritual nature of man, mementoes of a nobler origin, forecasts of a grander future. The fourth book of Wordsworth's *Excursion* is a noble and fervid protest against this bitter spirit of our day.

We must pass by many illustrations of our central thought and proceed to one which has struck every one as at once wonderfully suggestive of a great divine truth, yet wonderfully baffling in its details. We take up the old tragedy of *Æschylus* and are at once the spectators and hearers of the most startling scenes and utterances ever presented to any audience. Enter Strength and Force, with *Hephæstus* and the sublime victim *Prometheus*, amid the awful fastnesses of the Caucasian mountains. They bind *Prometheus* to the rock ; the punishment of the great "substitute" of old mythology commences. He moans out his feeling in that incomparable plaint, yet alone in its blended dignity and tenderness. Hark ! the pinions of the sea nymphs, and celestial odours float toward us as they enter. They float around the sufferer, they hover breathless as he tells his tale. Again the air is shaken and the awful form of *Oceanus*, the sea-god appears ; he too compelled by sympathy and yearning to learn the meaning of this terrible mystery. It bursts out in abrupt sentences. *Prometheus* is the friend of man. He has loved and aided the poor earth-dwellers, earth-sprung ;—he has helped them when *Jove* despised, hated, trampled upon them. He has given them fire, taught them useful arts. For this he suffers there, and must suffer, till the tyrant of heaven is stricken down and the gentler era begins. He suffers "with his mortals." He had delivered them from many ills, from fear of

death, from savagery, and irrepressible impulse towards destruction, and medicine taught them, and house-building—they who had lived in caves and holes in the earth. Taught them also to know and understand the seasons, the rising and setting stars, number and letters and memory. Taught them to subdue and turn to their service the useful beasts and horses champing the bit. Taught them to traverse the sea in winged ships. And gave them hope, that saveth man from despair. “These did I devise for mortals, these arts; and now, Ah me! is left me for myself but this, to suffer.”

Again, another voice, and wandering Io enters, yet another victim of Jove, fatal both in his love and hate. Io tells her tale, she suffers thus, changed to a beast, stung by the gad-fly, the victim of Jove’s selfish passion. After clear answers to his questions as to herself, she asks Prometheus why he does not cast himself headlong from the rock and foil the tyrant by death. Prometheus replies in his high strain. If there were no hope he would desire death; but he cannot die. He is bound here whilst Zeus reigns. And shall Zeus fall? And so through question and answer the great sufferer begins to counsel Io. He describes her future wanderings; a description unintelligible on any ground of locality, only serving to show how ignorant in all that mechanical knowledge on which we moderns pride ourselves, could be the age which produced such a huge sublime old piece of legendary truth. Then he turns to himself. Yes, he must suffer; he cannot die. But not for ever. A mightier than Zeus, one strong with a strength which he cannot wield, shall hurl him down. Let him belch his fires and dart his bolts, and roll his thunders. The good and faithful can wait.

Another step. The winged herald of the Gods enters. He demands from Prometheus—the crafty—the details of those fatal nuptials, whence, as he has prophesied, shall ensue the downfall of Zeus. He denounces a storm of horrible blasting fire if Prometheus refuses. In vain. Prometheus coldly expresses his scornful defiance. This young herald speaks as one vain of his office to the veteran of many wars. No, Prometheus repeats his prophetic warning. More he will not reveal. He laughs at the threats of Mercury. With high insults the messenger departs. His threats begins to fulfil. The earth shakes, the thunder rolls, the flaring bolts smite the fettered victim, wild winds whirl up the desert sands, the tempest confounds sea and sky. In darkness, shot through by dreadful fire, amid the confounding tumult of all the elements let loose to rage and shatter round that rock, with the voice of the Titan sounding in the pauses of the horrible din,—the scene and the sufferer whirl away from sight.

Now here is a huge fragment of some still vaster truth, so near, yet so far away, from the very central truth of our Christian verity, that we naturally enquire whence it comes, and its origin and transmission. What great conflict does this tradition indicate? What victory? The triumph of whom? Is it an undecipherable record of some great event in which our race is ultimately interested? Is it a prophecy of a future which has already come or is to come? What is it?—this strange production which arrests us just as man emerges from the dark unknown period of his primal state, and suggests so much, yet baffles us so completely. Nor is it alone in its vague “shadows of good things.” A great conflict, a great deliverance;—these indications of some grand truth rise before us vague, yet real, in that dim era of the history of all old races when, as yet, but vague glimpses of things or puzzling mementoes of some former state prevail. Amongst all peoples the conviction, kindred, if not one, with the Promethean myth, is to be found of a brighter time—once possessed, now lost—and a golden era to come. The Persians saw forward to such an age; the Indians count for it on to the tenth Avatar, or Incarnation; the Buddhist, rapt in divine ecstasy, foresees the Incarnation of Vishnu as Kalki,—restoring happiness, overthrowing evil; the Chinese look for a great Holy One from the West; the Mexicans at first hailed the Spaniards on the ground of such a hope; the great chain of northern traditions breathe the same inspiration. Baldrick—the good, the beautiful—perishes by the craft of Loki. Earth mourns; there is battle among the Gods; the world perishes by fire. Vidur, the conqueror, comes to restore all. Baldrick lives again. Perpetual spring clothes the earth. Virgil carries down the old legend from some ancient race in his splendid Fourth Eclogue. The curious conglomerate of tales in the history of our own King Arthur seems to echo the same far-away meaning. What shall we say of these? Curious flowers of that border-land, seeming in one aspect ruins of some noble era long swallowed up, as the shore is often by the sea, and re-appearing after cycles of change; seeming in another aspect as forecasts of that greater future, whose prophecy lies deep in the human heart and at the basis of all history. We have no space to gather up many other strange signs of that border-realm; indication of sacrifice; fore-shadowings of judgment and immortality; startling speculations as to life and spirit and the divine; but all changed, puzzling, like yet unlike to much now familiar to us in our religious convictions.

We have no time to recal more of these. But we must turn a thought to the question which must inevitably rise to our hearts, as standing amid these curious indications of a peculiar

period of man's spiritual history, we ask ourselves as to their origin. Whence come they? What are they? Are they the great fragments of a former state of man's spiritual being, or foreshadowings of his future? Spring they out of his own restless heart, or are they the traditions of a clear knowledge, become dim and confused in some great fall? We look at the border-realm of the sea, and as we gather its strange plants, we ask—Is this rescued from the sea? or is it being gradually engulfed in the deep? So we ask of man, as depicted in these old myths. Has man fallen, and his faith and knowledge with him, as in the Hesiodic "Works and Days?" Are these the strange scutcheons of a nobler heraldry, treasured to indicate our great fall, and incite us to a nobler future? Are we, at length, coming to realize them as high majestic prophecies?

But even as we meditate on the question, a certain ludicrous aspect of it arrests and sets our thoughts at work on a new phase of the idea. We pass with a crowd into a fine spacious building, and stand in astonishment, puzzled and perplexed. It is a chapel of the Establishment—Protestant. Yet here is an altar, blazing with light; in the clear day shine an altar-piece, a banner with a crucifix, a central cross with a figure of Christ on it, and a cross with a figure on either side. Flowers pleasantly and artistically disposed. I gaze and marvel. As I gaze, enter a procession to processional hymn, clergy leading. Bowings and scrapings before the altar: then here is a man—a priest, an obliging devotee tells me—turns his torso toward us, displaying a huge cross upon it, and intones a prayer. Then an officiating cherub, in white over scarlet with a huge cross, leads this individual to the pulpit, and holds up the huge cross, whilst the preacher tells us that there, on the altar, is the real presence of the Lord Jesus, ready to cure us, as He did the leper. We are exhorted to confess our sins to the priests; and—eh! Shades of Cranmer and Latimer! can it be?—our prayers for the dead are publicly asked. And this is a Protestant church; and it is the Protestant prayer-book this man is using. Here is a border region surely, very speedily to submerge in rank Popery.

And even when we turn to our own Nonconformist pastures, are we not sometimes startled at strange, uncouth, and even grotesque growths? But we have come to the limits of our space, and must hold our hand. Else, surely, at times, both in doctrine and in practice, we may be apt to fancy ourselves still on the border land, in the debatable region, neither sea nor good dry land, curious, interesting, but bearing no crops of corn, nor even a decent potatoe.

WHY NOT?

THE day's duties were done, the bookseller's monthly parcel untied, and a dozen periodicals speedily cut open by willing fingers. By-and-by I took up the October number of *Evangelical Christendom*,* and, glancing through the first article, a very able one and candid withal, on "Science and Atheism," turned with old interest and new curiosity to the second paper. Read it, and fell into a muse—a sort of reverie. I think it is my wont. A bad habit doubtless. The intellect plays, you know—not works—and plays dreamily. The zone is unbound; everything is unbound. A thousand idle fancies whisk about like butterflies and humming-birds. Foolish wishes come as thick as motes dancing in the sunbeam. A very old one of the kind—so old as to be gray by this time—came, and, giving me a not over respectful wink, and, as if having a right of way, entered by a sort of postern into one of the chambers of my brain. One was not enough; all were entered, and fairly mud-dled, by the idle interloper. "How often," said I, "that ridiculous old fancy has haunted my brain. Away with it!" But it did not go. It stayed; and by-and-by, of course, I fell to dallying with it. "Ah, 't would be worth something too," I said, with just an infinitesimal sigh. And then I half snuggled down for a doze, and half woke up for a bit of lazy imagining, or rather, perhaps, mere foolish fancying. Then, somehow, the singular number of the personal pronoun tumbled into the plural, and the simple vowel became the big portly editorial We.

"We would give our ears," said we, "to have the chance of fetching down St. Paul to earth again. There are a hundred questions we should dearly like to ask him. There are still more sights we should like to show him, and mark how they affected him. Rapidly explaining to him the course things took after his promotion by martyrdom at Rome, and down through the centuries, we would take him forth to see *our* kingdom of heaven, or Christendom: *i. e.*, he should witness the grand doings at St. Peter's, when Pope and Cardinals blaze out in full fig. He should see an Easter Sunday at the Holy Sepulchre, and watch the monks and devotees of the Greek and Latin Churches at their pious brawls and strange antics. We would take him

* *Evangelical Christendom*: a Monthly Chronicle of the Churches. Conducted by Members of the Evangelical Alliance. London: Nisbet and Co. Price Sixpence.

to 'Holy Moscow,' and show him the pictures and the other notions of 'the orthodox,' and let him listen to a *Te Deum* for the 'pacification' of Poland. He should look in on German Lutherans, and have the advantage of hearing a Professor or two lecture. Strauss should construct his Jesus over again—if, that is, the Apostle had lost so much of his old exuberance as to be able to abide the infliction. M. Renan should metamorphose a Provençal troubadour into a French-Hebrew shepherd attempting the rôle of a prophet, of course with tender shepherdesses forming an interesting part of the *entourage*. But, N. B., said part too big for '*le charmant docteur*.' Our descended visitor should spend an hour at Nôtre Dame, and see high mass; and we would expend a few francs in getting just a glimpse of the graceful Eugénie, high priestess of fashion, performing her devotions to a T as the priest would have it. We would explain to him the mysteries of the Confessional, or, if we were called away, would instal M. Michelét as expositor. And then we would make him sit in compulsory silence to watch, for a couple of hours, young girls and others going into the box that Popery makes a means of grace and an essential of Christianity.

Coming over to Britain, as we should call it (as being more familiar to his memory—he, once a Roman citizen, and knowing well the early Cæsars), we should have to decide which church to take him to first. But how could we hesitate? Explaining to him that, though the whole country professed itself Christian, and there were several thousands of churches here, and of far more and greater varieties than the first century could have produced, we should have to tell him that the Church of the Archbishop of Canterbury—(methinks, that dear face—I don't mean His Grace's,—would begin to pucker into an expression of perplexity, and I fear he would half suspect me of mystifying him)—claims to be the only true Church of the Lord Jesus in all this island. I am afraid he would not very easily comprehend me. But having quite a *penchant* for practical illustrations, I would try thus:—I would go to His Grace, and ask him just to let the author of the Epistle to the Romans preach in Canterbury Cathedral on Sunday morning—only once. His Grace is very courteous, as I know, but, poor man, what could he do? He would be in a regular fix. He might feel very small before the little quondam tent-maker of Cilicia, and would not, unasked, bestow his archiepiscopal benediction on me for my pains, and would look on his purple footmen and his own fine lawn sleeves with a trifle less complacency perhaps. But he could no more allow *Paulus redivivus* to preach in his diocese than he could me—unless, indeed,—(and he would hesitate at the intimation I guess)—the Apostle would submit to Episcopal ordin-

ation, receive authority from His Grace to forgive sins, and become an Anglican clergyman. Try London. The same : but with an additional twinge of conscience perhaps on the part of Dr. Tait. Try the Dean of Westminster. Ah, that is a trial which Dr. Stanley scarcely deserves. He'd be only too happy, but how could he? Pity, too. To be brief, the Apostle Paul would have to be made to understand at once that there was not a single parish church in all England in the pulpit of which he could be suffered to set foot. Happily, all he had to see would not be of this clouded and questionable complexion. I should be able to show him thousands of Christian ministers of all churches working simply towards the great end indicated by the cross, and tens of thousands of devoted Christians in private life seeking to do all the good they could, humble Florence Nightingales in obscure parts, rich laymen consecrating their wealth, noble institutions, and indeed an amount of earnest unostentatious devotedness that would be even worth his coming hither to look upon."

Here my foolish reverie gradually melted into a delicious slumber. I am a famous sleeper—and dreamer. And my dreams are generally pretty coherent. Of course no end of incongruities and impossibilities happen as they always do in dreams, but happily without any sense of the incongruity or absurdity. Well, I dreamed. It was all owing to that *Evangelical Christendom*, I am sure. Why, once the *Evangelical Alliance*, whose organ it is, gave me a three weeks' fit of illness. True. Well, I dreamed.

My chamber was full of light, very bright light. Presently, it all condensed itself into a luminous mass, and the mass became shapeable, took form, and was a figure. The figure was marvellously like Arthur Hughes's angel, in his picture of "The Annunciation," a sketch of which he gave me for a memorial of pleasant days, and which I dare say I had looked at before sinking into my slumber. "I am Gabriel," said he, very graciously, and with so much music in his voice that I wished he would say it again. "Very glad to see you, I'm sure. Pray be seated." He smiled, so pleasantly that I smiled too, and the smile seemed somehow not to be a smile of the face merely, but of all that was within me. "Your wish is granted," said he. And his words were music in the chamber, which seemed as if it would retain it, as the gilded Persian scent-bottle the attar of roses.

"What wish?" asked I; "for I have so many."

"That about the preacher of Tarsus."

"You don't mean it?" said I, starting up.

"Thinkest thou that God's angels play the fool with the

children of men?" said he, gravely. And there were more chords in the music.

"How shall he come?" he inquired.

"Oh," said I, "if it is all one, let him come much as he was when he stood before Nero."

"In the morning, at sunrise, expect him;" said he. "But mind, he will answer no questions of mere curiosity."

He was gone. In the morning, which of course came in an instant, I was abroad on my usual path. And, behold, towards the top of the gentle hill, under a clump of pines fragrant and rosy in the red sun-glow, I suddenly saw a stranger, of swarthy aspect. He was little of stature, and carried his head somewhat in advance. He wore a Roman toga, and at once I knew my man. I tried to fling myself into his arms, but somehow could not; at his feet, but he would not let me. We seemed in a moment to know one another well, like old friends, but that was of course one of the errors of the dream. His eye was like a falcon's, yet tender as a dove's. A thousand things happened which it would take me hours to narrate. I lived days and weeks with him, and he went wherever I would, and I carried out all that in the earlier part of this paper I had thought I would. But the more I showed him the more silent he grew, and concern and pathos became a prevalent tone, though at times a gleam of satisfaction and joy lighted up his countenance, as when on a dull and cloudy day a bright sun-beam darts through and irradiates the landscape. But the dear man was reminded of his former want of welcome in Jerusalem of old. For all the prelates of our land refused to let him teach or testify in any of their churches. And unless he would become, for the time of his stay, a Church of England man, he must be stigmatized as a schismatic,—like me.

We went to a Missionary meeting—crowded—capital—a great success. Popular speakers—one of them full of amusing anecdotes, and even jokes. Audience convulsed every now and then with laughter.—He could not see it. As the merriment rose his spirits seemed to flag. First rate collections, however, so no matter. I took him to a large gathering of Wesleyans, at Conference time.

"You know John Wesley, of course;" said I.

"Never heard of him," said he; "who is he?"

"Oh, a famous leader—the head of one of our largest and most useful sects—was taken to heaven before this century began. You must have met him."

"Never;" said he. "How do you call him?" and he seemed trying to recollect.

"John Wesley—Joannes Vesleius," I answered.

"Know nothing of him;" he persisted.

"The theological antithesis to John Calvin," I explained.

"And who is John Calvin?" he asked, in perfect innocence, utterly confounding all one's popular notions of heaven, of course.

I tried to explain, but all to no purpose. He had never met with or heard of either one or the other.

"But there must be crowds of Wesleyans in heaven;" said I. "And don't they all want to see John Wesley as soon as ever they have seen the Lord Jesus?"

"Never met any—what do you call them—Wesleyans? Why, what are they?"

"Oh, Christians," said I; "after the order of St. John Wesley. There are numbers of them got to heaven long ago."

"I would not let the Corinthians call themselves by my name," he said; "nor after Apollos. Who is this Wesley, then?"

I explained. And I am sure I tried to do justice to both "the venerable founder" of Methodism and his followers. At last the cloud passed from my visitor's brow, and such a lovely beaming smile mantled his face.

"Ah," said he, "I have it. You see a saint on passing in among us has to be stripped and divested of a good many things that he brings with him, and that in fact he is soon ashamed of when he once gets into that world of light." And he sighed as if at the thought he wanted to be back again. "From all you tell me the dear saint is in heaven," he continued, "sure enough, and I think I know whom you mean, but he has a new name there. We call him ——." He checked himself in an instant. "And," continued he, "if I am right in both my guesses he is a frequent associate with that other you named just now. How call you him?"

"John Calvin?" I asked.

"I dare say;" said he.

"And is it so," I asked, "that you have neither Wesleyans nor Calvinists in heaven?"

"Not one;" he said. "They must be all something else than that; holier, you know, and more loving than that."

Thinks I to myself I should like him to see a good muster of Baptists and Independents. And as you can do anything in dreams, everything happened as I chose. All the Baptist ministers of the kingdom came together on a vast plain, over two thousand of them—quite an army, and a good sturdy host they were. Banners they had waving in the breeze and sunshine. On every alternate banner a cross—with no figure on it—and on every alternate one a picture of a river, or a tank, and

the words, "HE THAT BELIEVETH AND IS BAPTIZED SHALL BE SAVED." This flag they who bore it waved about with an air of admirable confidence, that was very inspiring to see.

Right opposite to them was a somewhat larger body, not quite so demonstrative perhaps, and seemingly more observant of order, and affecting it may be a wee bit more of gentlemanliness, with a spice more of desired resemblance to "the clergy." Their banner had the cross and the inscription, "Go ye and teach* all NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM." While others bore the dear old words, "Suffer little children to come to me."

"And who are they?" asked my visitor looking at them wonderingly but kindly.

"They are the Independent ministers of England," said I, surveying them myself with thoroughly fraternal feeling.

"Independent!" repeated he, ignorant again.

So I explained all about that. But would any one believe it? I had the greatest difficulty in the world to make him comprehend why these two bodies chose to remain aloof instead of earnestly and warmly coalescing into one. And when I put it as plainly as I could and made it level to his capacity—(and I doubt whether I should have been able to make him see it at all if he had not already been here breathing this clogged atmosphere of earth for some time, so that he was getting accustomed to very anti-celestial things in *our* kingdom of heaven)—he looked from one body to the other in utter amazement. The admiration which, by my enthusiastic eulogiums on both impartially, he was prepared to feel gave place to the loftiest pity that I should think was possible.

"Poor fellows!" said he; "Poor fellows!" And he looked from side to side as pitiingly as you would look on any scene of physical wretchedness.

"In what do they agree?" he inquired, as if he were meditating an epistle. And I began to think we should get another, and that perhaps I would be amanuensis, beginning thus: "Paul the Apostle, &c., and Paululus (that's me—as the boy said, and had his knuckles rapped for bad grammar) &c."

"Oh," said I, "they agree in almost everything; in doctrine, as we call it, in Church government, in manners and tastes, and everything connected with Christianity, except this water question."

"I ask your kind patience," he replied; "but I am afraid even now I have not a proper comprehension of it. Can you put it very plainly? Remember it is something so foreign to all we know or care about on high." And he looked up, and

* *Μαθητεύει*—make disciples of, &c.

sighed again so sadly that I instinctively apologized for keeping him here. "Well, thinks I, I'll make him understand it now at all events." So I began, having these two hosts like two flocks of sheep, or goats, or lions, or whatever would be the appropriate symbol, on either hand, and he looking heedfully, and, as I went on, wistfully, first at one, and then at the other.

"All these," said I, pointing to the one host, "hold that the children of disciples are to be baptized, and accordingly, when a few weeks old, they have a little water brought and sprinkled on the face of the dear little babe in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

He bowed his head, resting it slightly in his open hand, which covered his broad forehead. When he looked up he turned his eyes very kindly on the body of men I had been speaking of.

"The others," said I, "insist on the individuality of discipleship, as loyalty can only be a personal thing. They say that the Master never contemplated His Church as constituted except of adults, or at least of members old enough to know all about it and decide for themselves. And so—"

"What;" said he. But whether it was a question or an exclamation I cannot recall, and so have written it without either sign.

"Well;" said he, presently.

"And so," I continued, "they baptize the grown-up disciples by plunging them entirely under water, for the most part in a tank provided in their chapels."

"You mean synagogues?" he inquired.

"Yes," said I, thinking it all one. "But you did not let me finish. They baptize each thus by complete immersion, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

Again he covered his brow with his hand, in a devout and meditative manner. But I added, "They quote you a good deal, —your Epistle to the Romans."

He looked up and turned his face full on the men I spoke of, and looked at them very kindly. Then he looked lovingly on both hosts.

"Which, think you, are the most devoted to the will of the Lord?"

"Impossible to guess;" said I, without a moment's hesitation.

"Which are the holiest?"

"Don't know."

"Which has the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ honoured most?"

"I don't see any difference," said I.

"Which party, now, do you think," said he, "is most kind and brotherly?"

"To one another among themselves, do you mean?" I asked; "or to all fellow Christians, and other people alike? for there is a great difference. Wesleyans love Wesleyans a hundred per cent. more than they love any other Christians. And so with Churchmen, and Baptists, and Independents."

He looked at me most curiously, but after a few moments repeated his question—

"Among which body is there most true brotherly love?"

"Really," said I, "you puzzle me. There are six of one to half-a-dozen of the other."

"Among which are the fewest dissensions? Have you any opinion on that point?"

"Well," I replied, but rather hesitatingly, "people do say that a spirit of division seems to creep into one kind of church a little more readily perhaps than into another. There is alleged to be a greater tendency to disintegration, to separation, in the one body; but I don't think I am a competent witness. I have been unfortunate perhaps."

"Would God," said he, looking wistfully at both hosts in turn, and quite as lovingly on one as on the other; "would God they would bear with me in my folly for a while. Methinks I would address them, as I once did my brethren in Jerusalem." Whereupon I shouted out aloud, and all eyes were turned to me.

"Stop!" said he. "Be wise as well as eager. What are you going to say?" It was too late. I had already proclaimed his name and wish. There was some movement in both hosts. I went forward a little and repeated that the stranger with me was no other than the Apostle Paul. And no one seemed greatly surprised. "Why not take advantage of his being here," I demanded, "to get the question that divides us from one another settled once for all? Oh, that would be a consummation! And if there were such a building up of Zion the Lord it may be would appear in his glory."

"Who are you, then?" they cried out from both sides. "To which of us do you belong yourself?"

"To both;" I answered, but saw at a glance that I gained no favour by that, rather lost perhaps. There was a good deal of consultation in each body. Some manifestly were delighted at the prospect, and ready to agree. There were good men on both sides that looked thoroughly like the children of the same mother, and certainly of the same Father. All these appeared as if they could heartily unite, and were evidently doing their best to soften prejudices and to bring about a blessed oneness. But some who had a sort of official look, and who cared more than their brethren perhaps for the keeping up of denominational distinctions, looked more wise and even pious than before as they

argued evidently against listening seriously to any overtures for a broader and better state of things. The noisiest on both sides, those that waved their rival flags about the most valiantly, were stoutest against any idea of altering the *status quo*. They laid their hands on their hearts, turned up their eyes to heaven, and said with fine firm martyr-like resolution, "*Non possumus*." By-and-by I could detect the more prevalent utterances of each host. It seemed that the majority had agreed and brought the others to consent at all events to hear what the stranger affirmed to be Paul would say. But a large party in one host avowed, one by one :—"If he says that babies are to be sprinkled, I won't believe that he is the Apostle." And as many on the other side : "If he says that adults are to be dipped I'll have nothing to do with him." But no doubt there was a very encouraging proportion of men ready to bow to truth whatever it might be. Some of the more eager called aloud to him to settle it at once ; aye, or, no.

"My brethren ;" he began, with such majestic courtesy, and in such a loving persuasive tone, that I hoped everything from it. "My brethren, I spoke on occasion sharp things about circumcision, yet I circumcised Timothy notwithstanding. And when the infant churches were likely to be split asunder by controversies about meats and drinks and days, remember ye how the Spirit of Christ which was in me led me to speak ? I taught them all alike to love one another, and reverence each other's consciences, as far more essential than the having a decisive Yes or No from me. And I implored them to live as brethren, and that the strong should bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves. And so with you. Let him that is baptized in a pool consider that to the Lord he is baptized, and being persuaded in his own mind let him be thankful and loving and holy. Let not him that sprinkleth deride him that dippeth ; and let not him that dippeth despise him that sprinkleth. And if any one, being persuaded in his own mind, baptizeth infants, let not him that tarrieth for a season have injurious surmises. Neither let him who baptizeth children reproach him that baptizeth only adults. I beseech you that ye love as brethren, and that ye mark all who seek to divide and separate brother from brother, or church from church, and admonish them, and cultivate the unity of the Spirit. Love, my brethren, believe me, Love is the perfect bond."

And not a man there had power to draw from him a single word by which he might be understood to favour either party, or to decide authoritatively the long-vexed question. He said firmly, that principles not rules, not maxims, were to guide them ; and tried to convince them that it would be altogether incon-

sistent with the spirit he had formerly shown to give the victory and advantage to either class of disputants. I need not say that his course was very disappointing to many on both sides, and that it was only a class that said, "This is the word we have been waiting for." And these came over to each other from both sides, and giving one another the cordial hand, as a pledge once for all that this question should no longer be a barrier between them, lo! there stood upon the ground a third party, and instantly new banners were extemporized with the mottoes—"Christ all"—"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ;" and these fell to embracing Paul, and prophesying all sorts of better days for the churches. The rest drew off; did not much care to greet him; and resolved that they would do as they had done heretofore, and keep up all the old watchwords, and the old party organs, and set camp against camp till the world should end. And these made so much commotion and noise, and their voices grew so discordant, that I awoke—and, behold! it was all nothing but a dream!

The readers of the CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR, however, will perhaps pardon the dreamer, who moreover is not unknown to any of them, and they will no doubt read the article in *Evangelical Christendom*, which is chargeable with suggesting it. It is the second article, and entitled, "On the Union of Baptists and Independents." But the writer evidently is not over sanguine. Paululus, however, submits that if ever there is an English Pentecost, as there once was a Jerusalem one, Baptists and Independents and a good many more, more thoroughly and manifestly than now, will all gladly come to be one in Christ Jesus.

GOD IN THE MOUNTAINS.

A SCENE of circling mountains. Ridge on ridge
 Of rough serrated summits rising round ;
 Some dark with plummy pines—some streaked with streams
 That plunged and foamed unheard in lonely power—
 Some bald and gray and barren as with years
 Untold, and bearing on their blighted front
 Mysterious syllables of eldest Time ;—
 Then, far beyond, a few white heights soared sheer,
 Those purest and most piercing silvery spires
 That crowned this great cathedral of the hills :
 And over all in weltering fulness flowed
 The vast illumination of the West,
 Filling the piny bluffs with emerald fire—
 Reddening the snowy rills—and each pale peak
 Enriching with a crest of crystal light.

Upon the pebbly marge of a blue lake,
 That nestled 'mid those giants of the land,
 Stood a fair child with one that loved her well,
 And watched the splendour of the sunset flame
 Like a Shekinah on the solemn fells ;
 And as she looked with wide, gray, serious eyes
 Upon the mystery and loveliness
 Of darkening gorge and shining pinnacle,
 She said, " Does God live in these mountains ? " touched
 With heavenly instinct, for her heart was full.

Children always believe in God. It is
 A Faith that kindles with the opening soul,
 And pleads in beauty of a mother's eyes ;
 'Tis nursed in the pure air of homely love,
 And felt in mystic sunsets when the fresh
 Creation is a wonder and an awe.
 God smiles then in the greenery of spring,
 Throbs in the deep pulsations of the sea,
 And glances through the softness of far stars.
 Souls are like rivers, purest near their source ;
 We earthen as we age, and oft the life
 That dawned fair sets in darkness and wild rain.
 Well might That lover of the children say—
 None but the childlike-hearted could see Heaven.

J. TRUMAN.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DID THE INSPIRED WRITERS CLAIM INFALLIBILITY
FOR THEIR WRITINGS ?

MR. EDITOR,—I gladly comply with your request to furnish proofs that the inspired writers “considered themselves under the infallible guidance of the Spirit of God in what they recorded, and claimed for their instruction divine authority.” And I refer first of all to the passage quoted by “Llennard,” 2 Tim. iii. 16. “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, &c.*” Whether this text be taken as it stands, or as rendered in the “Notes,” which rendering is rejected by some of the best authorities, it distinctly affirms that all the then existing sacred Scriptures were divinely inspired—*θεόπνευστος*—God-breathed, or given by the breath, or Spirit of God, and “profitable for instruction, &c.” The obvious meaning of the passage, in both constructions of it, is, that *all* that was then written (*πᾶσα γραφή*) was written under divine inspiration and was profitable because so written. It seems to me to be a violent straining of the passage to say that the Apostle meant that inspiration belonged to a part only, and not to the whole, of the sacred Scriptures. Such a sense is not suggested by the passage, and is at variance with other declarations of the Scriptures on the subject, especially with what occurs 2 Peter i. 21, “*For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man ; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*” The term “prophecy,” as here used, was of extensive signification, and included the whole of the Scripture representations concerning the Messiah, and which, according to Christ Himself, Luke xxiv. 27—44, embraced “*the law of Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms,*”—*i. e.*, the entire Scriptures, for they are all included in these designations. Of prophecy, in this extensive sense, Peter said, that it “came not by the will of man ; but Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” The two passages cast light on each other. Paul says that all Scripture is God-breathed and therefore infallible ; and Peter says that it *was* written under the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The Old Testament Scriptures abound with passages which assert their divine infallibility. Moses affirms that God said to him, Exod. iv. 12, “I will be with thy mouth.” David said 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, “The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his

word was in my tongue." Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and others say, "Thus saith the Lord," "The word of the Lord was upon me," and "Hear the word of the Lord." We read that "The word came to Jeremiah from the Lord," and of "The burden of the Lord by Malachi," and "The word of the Lord came by Haggai the Prophet," and "The word of the Lord came unto Hosea," and so on. These and other assertions of the prophets show that they regarded themselves as the media of divine revelation, the very mouth of God, and that they believed that what they recorded was written under the special guidance of His Spirit, and therefore infallible.

In harmony with these self-assertions of the Prophets, the whole Bible was regarded by Christ and His inspired Apostles as of divine authority, and was designated "The Word of God," and "The Word of the Lord," and even, as in Rom. iii. 2, "*The oracles of God*," than which no words could more strongly express the divine infallibility of the entire Scriptures. Christ said, John x. 35, "The Scriptures cannot be broken." Peter tells us, Acts i. 16, that "The Holy Ghost spake by the mouth of David;" and Acts iii. 18, that "God spake by the mouth of all His Prophets,"—i. e., they were all, and always, the mouth of the Holy Ghost, and therefore infallible in regard to what they wrote. Whenever Christ and His Apostles referred to the Old Testament Scriptures, they spake of them as the Word of God, and as possessing divine infallibility and authority. Whether they referred to them in general terms, or to particular passages, they uniformly represented them as written under the infallible guidance of the Holy Ghost. They never intimated that there was throughout the Scriptures the least exception to this, and they never taught or said the least thing which implied that any part of the sacred Oracles was not the Word of God, or lacked divine authority. Neither did they seem for a moment to imagine that one part was the Word of God in a lower sense, or had less authority than the rest. It was left to uninspired minds of modern times to discover that *parts* of the Bible only are inspired, and to discriminate the faulty from the infallible, which, to our poor faculties, seems, as Dr. Pye Smith asserts, "to need another revelation;" for, in the absence of this, the infallibility of any portion will be determined by man's fallible judgment; and so the Bible will be different to different readers, those portions only receiving the respect due to infallible truth which, in their opinion, are infallible; and this, notwithstanding the evidence which authenticates that which they receive as true, authenticates also that which they reject as false. The object of Christ and His inspired Apostles was to excite among men a reverence for all and every part of the sacred Scriptures. *They*

thus endorsed the whole Bible, and in terms which precluded all questioning. Men may controvert the fact of the infallibility of the Scriptures, but, in the face of such clear testimony, they can scarcely refuse to admit that Christ and His Apostles regarded the whole of the Old Testament as written under divine direction, and as therefore infallible.

In regard to the New Testament writers, there is not less evidence that they claimed infallibility and divine authority for their writings. Christ expressly promised to the Evangelists and Apostles that He would send the Holy Spirit, "the Spirit of truth," to "guide them into all truth," to "teach them all things," and to "bring all things to their remembrance;" and that the "Spirit" should "speak in them,"—promises which had regard especially to what they should *write* respecting Him. If these promises of Christ were fulfilled, then the Evangelists and Apostles were favoured with unerring guidance in what they wrote, and their writings are infallible.

But we are not left to this inference. The New Testament writers evidently considered themselves under the infallible direction of the Spirit of Truth. They did not, indeed, frequently and formally assert their claim, for this was not necessary; yet they manifestly wrote under the conviction that they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and that their writings possess the same authority as that which they ascribed to the Old Testament writers. Thus the Apostle Paul speaks of Christians, Ephes. ii. 20, "as built upon the foundation of the *Apostles and Prophets*," giving to the Apostles' writings the same authority as those of the Prophets. Peter, in his second Epistle, iii. 15, 16, speaks of the Epistles of Paul as on a footing with "*the other Scriptures*." And in the beginning of this chapter he says, "I write unto you *that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy Prophets, and of the commandments of us the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour*." Thus claiming for their writings the same divine authority with those of the Prophets. In Galatians i. 11, 12, the Apostle says, that the Gospel he preached "is not after men;" and that he received it "*by revelation of Jesus Christ*." In 1 Cor. ii. 10—13, he says, "God hath revealed them to us by His spirit," and that he and the other Apostles spake, "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, *but in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth*." In 2 Cor. ii. 17, he says, "We speak *as of God*." And in 1 Cor. xiv. 37, "*The things which I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord*." And again he declares that he "received of the Lord" that which he taught. In this way he puts forth a distinct claim to be regarded as clothed with divine authority, and invested with infallibility in regard to what he wrote. In 1

Thess. ii. 13, he says, that the truth which he taught was "not the word of man," but "*the word of God*." The Apostle John, in his first Epistle, iv. 6, says, "We are of God. He that knoweth God heareth us."

These citations, which might be multiplied, are sufficient to show that the Evangelists and Apostles regarded what they wrote as written under special divine guidance. They seem never to have imagined themselves liable to error; but, on the contrary, regarded themselves as divinely commissioned, and infallibly guided, and required for what they wrote unqualified reception. And to refuse to recognize the claims which they so distinctly put forth, is to regard them as guilty of imposture.

Yours respectfully,

A. E. PEARCE.

St. Helier's, Oct. 1, 1866.

MY DEAR SIR,—It was very kind of you to stand "sponsor" for me. I am grateful both to you for requesting, and to Mr. Pearce for furnishing, the "proofs" which he thought it so easy to cite, and I so hard to find. I think I shall best show the sincerity of my gratitude by discussing them with the frankness of which Mr. Pearce has set me the example. And as we all "desire the truth," if not with "open eyes," at least with eyes as nearly open as we can persuade them to be, I will not encroach upon your space with many criticisms on the criticisms with which Mr. Pearce has favoured my "Notes," but proceed almost directly to consider the "proofs" he has quoted, and the theory of inspiration which his letters imply.

1. I halt, for a moment or two, simply to point out to him the one sentence I am sorry he should have written; and I do that very mainly because it is part of the one criticism which I shall select as a fair sample of his general line of critical remark. In speaking of the case of Stephen I had said, that, in his defence before the Sanhedrin, he fell into "two clear historical blunders, and two assertions either so general or so specific as to be inexact." On which Mr. Pearce remarks, that "if the writer assumes that he (Stephen) was all the while speaking as moved by the Holy Ghost, then to charge him with uttering falsehoods, involves what the writer would shrink from avowing." Now is that fair? If I know myself, I shrink from

avowing no conviction which I hold. And though, as Mr. Pearce is an entire stranger to me, he could not know that for many years now I have been avowing unpopular opinions at my own risk, and to my cost, yet I must ask him whether, when he re-considers the passage on which he uttered this comment, he finds any ground in it for the insinuations which he has—as I hope, inadvertently—made? In that passage I allege that Stephen was inspired, “full of the Holy Ghost,” but that nevertheless he fell into clear historical blunders. But a blunder is one thing, a falsehood another. And so far from shrinking from the logical inference from my premises, I proceed to explain that Stephen quoted from the Septuagint version, not from the Hebrew Scriptures, and that “the Holy Spirit was given to him, not that he might correct the {false readings of the Septuagint, but”—in short, for far higher ends. This was my inference; it was avowed in the plainest terms. And it was not well of Mr. Pearce to change my “blunders” into his “falsehoods,” and then insinuate that I held, or might hold, that from the avowal of which I shrank.

But I dare say this was *only a blunder* on his part, and I draw his attention to it, partly because I think that such amenities should not disfigure the controversy of Christian gentlemen, but mainly because it forms part of a short critical paragraph, which, though I take it to be a fair sample of much of his criticism, I do not feel to be very convincing. The two blunders alleged against Stephen in the “Notes” were, first, that he says Abraham migrated into Charran “*when his father was dead,*” while the Book of Genesis dates the migration “*sixty years before his father died;*” and, secondly, that he says “Abraham bought a burial-place *in Sychem, of Emmor,*” while Genesis says that “Abraham bought his burial-place *of Ephron, in Hebron,*” and that it was Jacob who bought a field, not a sepulchre, of Emmor, in Sychem. The two inexactnesses I alleged were, that Stephen says “three-score and *fifteen*” souls of the Hebrews went down into Egypt, where Moses says “three-score and *ten*,” and that Stephen says the children of Israel sojourned in Egypt “*four hundred,*” while Moses says “*four hundred and thirty*” years. Now, obviously, the weak point in this allegation is the last; and because I knew that it would be easy to say, and fair to say, “Stephen was speaking in round numbers, and you can hardly call that a blunder,” I was careful to mark it, not as a falsehood, nor even as a blunder, but as an assertion so general as to be inexact. How should a critic, bent on disproving the allegation, yet zealous for the truth, have dealt with it? Surely by addressing himself to its stronger and more difficult counts, and not by touching the weak point of it with a weapon which

I had laid ready to his hands. Yet this is what Mr. Pearce does. He takes up the one weak point about the round numbers, but does not attempt to reconcile the graver discrepancies I had pointed out, or to meet the more difficult counts of the allegation, save by the following singular assertions:—(1) that “there is no positive proof that Stephen spoke under inspiration:” (2) that it “is not clearly established” that “some of his statements were erroneous;” and (3) that “the question is not, did Stephen say what was not true, but has the inspired Evangelist accurately recorded what he actually said?” To this last remark I will return by-and-by. But for the other two—what can one say of them? Take them together, and the one destroys the other: for if Stephen were not inspired, what does it matter how erroneous his statements were? Take them apart, and they really seem to demand that one should be logic-proof. For (2) what *can* prove one of two statements to be erroneous, if not the fact, that they flatly contradict each other? If Stephen asserts that Abraham migrated to Charran *when, i. e.,* just after, his father died, and Moses asserts that he migrated sixty years *before* his death; if Moses affirms that Abraham bought a particular place of Ephron in Hebron, and Stephen that he bought it in Sychem of Emmor; if Moses, carefully numbering up Jacob’s family makes them seventy souls, and Stephen makes them five more—not speaking “in round numbers” this time—do they not contradict each other? Are we not shut up to the dilemma that either Moses’ or Stephen’s statements are erroneous? But perhaps (1) Stephen was not inspired! Perhaps not: but if he were not, who was? Mr. Pearce suggests that it was “*after he had finished his address*” that he is said to have been “full of the Holy Ghost.” But if this argument were used against his theory, would not Mr. Pearce be tempted to think it a pitiful evasion? If when, as in his second letter, he quotes a “Thus saith the Lord” from one of the prophets, or a “We speak as of God” from one of the Apostles, I were to suggest that all that went before this claim, or that, was not inspired because it came *before* the words which asserted inspiration, what would he think of the suggestion? Yet that suggestion would have greater force than his. For before he was put on his defence, we are told of Stephen that he was “full of faith and of the Holy Ghost:” when he was called before the Sanhedrin they looked on him “and saw his face as it were the face of an angel;” and when at last, cut to the heart by the wisdom and the spirit with which he spake, they gnashed upon him with their teeth, we are told that “*being full of the Holy Ghost*”—not suddenly filled, but being already full—“he gazed stedfastly into heaven.” If language can convey thought, did not Luke intend to convey

that Stephen was inspired throughout? If, too, in his ordinary ministry, Stephen was "full of the Holy Ghost," can we believe that in that critical moment of his history and the Gospel's, when he was brought "before governors," the gracious promise of the Master was not fulfilled, and that the Spirit did not "teach him in that same hour what he should speak?" Mr. Pearce must beware lest in arguing for the infallibility of the Scriptures he should deny, or question, whether they are so much as inspired. He is in some danger, as it seems to me, of bringing them into doubt in his endeavour to establish their authority.

2. But now let me once more thank him for the ready kindness with which he has furnished the "proofs" for which you asked him, and say what I "deem fitting about them." I wish I could say they were forcible and cogent; but, honestly, I cannot. To me they seem wholly to miss the mark. We asked for proofs of the *infallibility* of the Holy Scriptures: he has given us proofs of their *inspiration*: in other words he assumes the very hypothesis he was to demonstrate—taking for granted that inspiration carries infallibility with it, which was the very point the "Notes" ventured to question. That in saying this I do Mr. Pearce's argument no injustice, must surely be apparent to all such of your readers—for, of course, we take them all to be thoughtful persons—as have run through his second letter. But lest he should think that I am escaping a difficulty under cloud of a general assertion and an appeal to the intelligence of the reader—an artifice (*vulgariter*, "the cuttle-fish dodge") not altogether unknown—permit me briefly to review the proof passages he has cited.

2. Tim. iii. 16. I do not apprehend that there is any great conflict of opinion as to the construction and meaning of this verse among "*the best authorities*." Even Bishop Ellicot and Dean Alford, both orthodox men, admit, though somewhat hesitatingly, that the rendering should be, "Every Scripture, given by inspiration of God is profitable," &c. But there is no need to argue the point. If we accept the reading Mr. Pearce prefers, does it affirm infallibility of the Bible? So far as I can see, it does nothing of the kind. St. Paul reminds Timothy how his youth has been nourished on the Hebrew Scriptures; how these, read in a Christian sense, *i. e.*, with faith in Christ, are able to make him wise unto salvation; and assures him that these familiar Scriptures are inspired of God, and therefore profitable for instruction, &c. Well, the "Notes" deny no jot of this. They also affirm the Hebrew Scriptures to be inspired, and to be very profitable. The only question is as to the meaning of inspiration. I put one interpretation on the word; Mr. Pearce an-

other ; but is it any proof that he is right and I am wrong, that he should quote the very word the meaning of which has to be determined ?

2. Peter i. 21. The meaning of this passage is a little doubtful. As I read it, it runs thus :—We do well to give heed to “prophecy,” *i. e.*, the Hebrew Scriptures ; for they are as a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the morning star arise in our hearts, *i. e.*, until we have the inward witness of the Spirit of Christ ; for these ancient Scriptures were the utterances of men who spake not of their own will, but as they were carried along by the Holy Ghost, as a ship is borne before the winds. If my reading be correct, the passage favours my view of Scripture rather than Mr. Pearce’s. It affirms, or implies, that the Old Testament writings are like a lamp, casting a little guidance into the darkness ; while Christ and His Gospel are as the star of morning and the dawn of day. We do well to give heed to the lamp while the night lasts ; but when the day comes, shall we affirm that lamplight is as good as daylight ? So soon as we receive Christ, we receive “a more sure word of prophecy”—the very Spirit which impelled holy men of old now dwells in us. But read the passage how we may, surely all it affirms about inspiration is, that the Hebrew Scriptures were inspired by the Holy Ghost ; and how does that help us to determine what inspiration is, and what were its limitations ?

When, commenting on these two passages, Mr. Pearce concludes, “Paul says, ‘All Scripture is God-breathed, and *therefore infallible* ;’ and Peter says it was written under the *infallible* guidance of the Holy Spirit,” I can only wonder at his easy logic. I am unable to understand how it is he does not see that he is assuming the very point he has to prove ; that, without any reason given, he is taking for granted that infallibility and inspiration are convertible terms.

With respect to the various passages quoted by Mr. Pearce from the Old Testament—the passages in which Prophets and Psalmists affirm that God speaks by their mouth, that His word is in their tongue, that the word or burden of the Lord came to them—I can only repeat that these too are beside the mark. For I affirm in the “Notes,” no less strongly than he believes, that God spake by and through the holy men of old : but none the less I hold that He spake to them according to their several capacity for receiving and uttering His truth, not giving absolute truth and the perfect morality till He came and dwelt among us in the Perfect Man who had the Spirit without measure. To quote their claims to inspiration—does that prove that their inspiration was perfect and absolute, like that of Christ ?

Nor do the passages cited from the New Testament, in which

the Old Testament is called "the Word of the Lord;" "the Oracles of God," &c., add anything to Mr. Pearce's argument. The Old Testament *is* the word of God; but my point is, that the eternal uttering itself in time, the divine and infinite truth revealing itself through the finite forms of human speech, must, by the very necessity of the case, accommodate itself to its media, grow as they grow, rise as they rise; and that, therefore, the earlier utterances of the word of God, as given through men, are not of the same force and authority with the last best disclosures of His grace. St. Paul, or I am much mistaken, thought so too, and constantly dwells on the superiority of the Gospel over the Law. It is a proof, I think, of the haste with which Mr. Pearce has written that, after quoting these passages in which our Lord and His Apostles refer to the Hebrew Scriptures as the word of God, he emphatically sums up, "*They thus endorse the whole Bible.*" For is not the New Testament a part, and the best part, of Mr. Pearce's Bible? And if it is, how could our Lord and His Apostles endorse Scriptures which as yet were not written?

For myself, sir, the New Testament is so much the better part of my Bible, that I looked with special eagerness to see what proofs Mr. Pearce could allege of its infallibility. It is not without concern I inform him that his arguments seem to me as wide of the mark—and on the same side of it—in respect of the Greek as to the Hebrew Scriptures. If I take his meaning, they amount to this:—That the Lord Jesus promised His Spirit to His disciples, and that it should guide them into all truth; that they claim to have received their Gospel by the revelation of Jesus Christ; and that hence they spake not as man's wisdom prompts, but as the Holy Ghost taught them, delivering not the word of man, but the word of God. All of which is very true—but how does it bear on the meaning and limitations of inspiration? How Mr. Pearce arrives at the conclusion that "these promises had regard especially to what they (the Apostles) should *write*," I am at a loss to conceive. The special reference of most of the promises was to what the disciples should say and teach, to the Gospel they should speak, not to "what they should write." That their Scriptures had "the same divine authority with those of the prophets," and stood on an equal "footing," few Christian men would deny: some of us are forward to admit that they stand on a higher footing and are clothed with a superior authority. But we may admit all that, and yet deny that their knowledge was as large and absolute as that of their Divine Master, or that the infallibility which attached to every word that fell from His lips, attaches to every word they wrote. Nor is it well to be endowed with a convenient memory—and to quote from one chapter in St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, "the things

which I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord"—a passage which has nothing in the world to do with the peculiar inspiration claimed for the Apostolic writings—yet not to advert to the fact that in another chapter * of that same Epistle, he disavows that authority, expressly telling us that some of his scriptures are not infallible, not inspired even, that he speaks "by permission, not by commandment;" that *he* speaks "and not the Lord;" that he has received no commandment, but gives his "judgment as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful." Could I spare time, sir, and you space, I would go through Mr. Pearce's New Testament proofs *seriatim*. I think I could show that several of them have nothing to do with the inspiration of the Apostolic Scriptures. But even if we accept them all, and his interpretation of them all, they simply claim, what we both affirm, the inspiration of the New Testament; they do not define that inspiration, much less do they claim infallibility for it. In the very Gospels and Epistles in which he finds them, I find that the Lord Jesus promised His Spirit to all who should believe on Him; that the Apostles expressly declare of all the faithful that they have the Holy Ghost; that He dwells in them; that the Divine Word is very near to them, in their heart and in their tongue. Had these affirmations been made of the inspired penmen, how eagerly would they have been quoted as proofs of their peculiar inspiration and the infallibility of it! Yet obviously Mr. Pearce does not admit my infallibility, nor I his, although I hope we both recognize each other as believers and brethren in Christ.

3. I see that Mr. Pearce honours some view other than mine with the title of "orthodox." I am afraid therefore that, in his judgment, my "Notes" express a heterodox view of this question. Will he be very much shocked to learn that, in my judgment, those whom we should probably agree to call "the orthodox"—though in a different sense—will think the view he takes much more heretical than mine? In his second letter, he is a little severe on those "uninspired minds of modern times" who have discovered that only "parts of the Bible are inspired," and who "discriminate the faulty from the infallible." He affirms that our Lord and His Apostles "never intimated that there was throughout the least exception to this," viz., "the infallible guidance of the Holy Ghost;" "they never taught or said the least thing which implied that any part of the Sacred Oracles was not the word of God: neither did they seem for a moment

* 1 Cor. vii. 6, 12, 25. But the first of these verses may mean that *St. Paul* is giving his permission, "not laying his commandments on his children."

to imagine that one part was the word of God in a lower sense, or had less authority than the rest." Happily it is not my business to reconcile these sweeping assertions with our Lord's opposition of His authority to that of "them of old time," or of him that spake "to them of old time"—if that reading be preferred—in the Sermon on the Mount, or with His express declaration that one of the commandments given by Moses was given because of the Jewish "hardness of heart." What I wish to point out to Mr. Pearce is, that *he* will inevitably be ranked with the uninspired minds of modern times who discriminate between one part of the Bible and another, since he repeatedly assumes that certain portions of the Sacred Oracles either lack divine authority or have it in a lower sense than the rest. As we have seen, he has his doubts about the inspiration of Stephen; the defence of the proto-martyr may be only "an accurate report of what he actually said." He has his doubts also, as we learn from his first letter, about "the song of Deborah," about "the book of Esther," and about "other documents"—a perilously general phrase—which nevertheless "it seemed good to the Divine Spirit to incorporate with the sacred writings. These (he adds), with much besides that is contained in the Scriptures, were matters with which the sacred writers were familiar *apart from the Spirit's teaching*." He has his doubts, moreover, about the genealogies of our Lord: "the Evangelists did not, and could not, furnish them *from their own knowledge*; they merely transcribed from existing documents." Alas, what a falling off is here! The sacred penmen, in writing certain portions of their Scriptures, wrote "*apart from the Spirit's teaching*," and are possibly inaccurate because they could not speak "*of their own knowledge*"! But the hypothesis is, that they were never without the teaching of the Spirit, never left to their own knowledge; and if they could not discover and correct the blunders in the genealogies, could not that all-wise Spirit who moved them? It is very true that Mr. Pearce seeks to guard himself against the logical result of his own admissions by saying that "infallible inspiration does not at all involve the idea that all the utterances and actions recorded in the Scriptures were dictated by the Spirit of God, but only that He has judged it necessary to record them, and has vouched for the veracity of the record;" but he must allow us to have an opinion on that point as well as himself. And, certainly, to most minds it would seem that an infallible inspiration guaranteed something more than an accurate transcription of uninspired, and possibly inaccurate, documents. An infallibly accurate copy of a demonstrably inaccurate document—is that of much worth to us? Can it possibly be the product

of an infallible inspiration? How, again, is the uninspired reader to discriminate between what was written by the Spirit's teaching and what was written apart from it; between what the sacred writers wrote of their own knowledge and what they derived from a higher source? How, for instance, is he to know that the song of Deborah is "faulty," or "merely human," or even "false and wicked;" or that the book of Esther is an excerpt from "the Chronicles of the Kings of Persia?" To all outward appearance Esther is as much and as directly inspired as Ruth, and the song of Deborah a loftier flight than is native to the book of Judges. If, as Mr. Pearce seems to think, Stephen were not inspired, because the Holy Spirit did not move him to correct the mistakes of the Septuagint from which he quoted, how are we to know that Luke and Matthew were inspired, although the Holy Spirit did not move them to correct the mistakes in the genealogies from which they copied? Nay, if Stephen were not inspired to make his defence before the Sanhedrin, how can we be sure that Peter was inspired to preach his sermon in Solomon's porch, or Paul to utter his grand oration on the Areopagus?

To insist, as Mr. Pearce does, that certain parts of the Bible are only accurate transcriptions of uninspired documents and orations, what, after all, is this but to admit that these parts are the word of God in a much lower sense than others and come to us clothed with an authority less divine? What is it but to concede the very point for which he is contesting, and to confess that inspiration does not carry infallibility with it? Can it be that Mr. Pearce sees no difference between an infallible teacher and an accurate scribe? Does he suppose that that view will pass muster with "the orthodox" which permits him to condemn Deborah's song as not of God, because it is repugnant to his moral sense; and to question the inspiration of Stephen, who was "full of the Holy Ghost," while he maintains that of Luke, who only claims for his Gospel that he took a great deal of pains to make it as accurate as he could? I know very little of the orthodox, though I have had some experience of them, if he is not speedily taught his mistake.

Yours faithfully,

LENNARD.

[NOTE.—We have readily inserted Mr. Pearce's animadversions on the article on Inspiration and the writer's reply, and with this the discussion must for the present terminate.—ED.]

BRIEF NOTICES OF BOOKS.

Unitarianism: What Claims has it to Respect and Favour? By JOSEPH BARKER. London: Elliot Stock. Price Sixpence.

Modern Socinianism Unscriptural, Unreasonable, and Ruinous to the Souls of Men. By Rev. W. THORN. London: Jackson, Walford and Co. One Shilling.

Ecce Homo: Or the Inferential Argument in Favour of the Godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ. By Rev. JOHN STOCK. London: Elliot Stock. Price Fourpence.

Six Essays on Inspiration, Revealed Religion, and Miracles. By EDWARD HIGGINSON. London: Whitfield, Green, and Son. 1866. Price Two Shillings.

Prayers for Private Meditation and the Home. By JOHN PAGE HOPPS. Second Edition. London: Whitfield, Green, and Son. 1866.

WE group these publications together, notwithstanding the repugnance of some of the writers to others; for the first two are assaults on Unitarians, and the last two are works by Unitarian ministers. Mr. Barker, we believe, has passed through many changes of belief, from Wesleyanism, through Infidelity, if not Atheism, or proximate Atheism, back to some form of Christianity again; and we think we lately saw, in some paper, an intimation of the probability of his receiving ordination in the Church of England. But we never read a line of his till this pamphlet came into our hands, and in the interests of truth and holiness and goodness we must express our conviction that the tone in which it is written deserves to be severely reprobated. We give a specimen:—"A friend, who has good opportunities of observing, informs me that it is a very common thing for the sons of respectable Unitarians to become godless, reckless profligates." "We have received from persons connected with the Unitarians many startling communications with regard to the state of morals in the denomination, and we have seen sufficient with our own eyes to satisfy us that the tendency of Unitarian morality is ever downward. In some cases the congregations have sunk down into drunken cliques or clubs, and spent the funds left by the old Presbyterians in rioting and drunkenness." That Mr. Barker's pamphlet, however well intended, will intensify mutual exasperation we have no doubt, exciting bitter prejudice against Unitarians on the one hand, and of course on the other hand irritating the whole body, which will justly consider itself maligned. There is such a thing as Christian spirit as well as Christian dogma, and the latter alone is not Christianity.

Mr. Thorn, of Winchester, is well known in the ranks of con-

troversy. Churchmen and Baptists regard him as a somewhat formidable opponent, not however exclusively for the strength of his arguments, but for the feeling he displays and excites. He can shoot a good sharp arrow, and send it right home with force, but too often its point is dipped in — well, something corrosive. It is unfortunate for him that, judging from his tracts against the Church of England and against the Baptists, he cannot respect an opponent, or sympathize with him. The man he deems wrong is an enemy to be exposed to odium at all events, and put down if possible. Our own opinion is that if we cannot understand that a man whose belief is very diverse from our own may be as honest as ourselves, and as good too, we are by this defect incapacitated from conducting a controversy with him with any hope of good result. Neither would we willingly enter into controversy with any man who would not concede to us as much integrity as he gave himself credit for. Mr. Thorn, we fancy, would hardly deem "Michael the archangel" up to the mark "when, contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses," he contented himself with a very calm and dignified rebuke. However, if any one wants a good shilling's worth of anti-Socinian polemic, a bold uncompromising epitome of thoroughly orthodox statement on the subject, without any weak respect for Unitarians, or indeed any other care for them than—not how they may be convinced and persuaded and converted, but—how they may be exposed to suspicion and abhorrence, perhaps he could not do better than have recourse to our veteran friend Mr. Thorn, who thoroughly well understands one side of this important controversy.

Mr. Stock has taken for the title of his little pamphlet the exclamation of Pilate, which, as the title of a well-known book, has lately been in everybody's mouth—*Ecce Homo*! It is of course scarcely to be expected that any new argument can be imported into so old a controversy; but Mr. Stock has very fairly presented such a summary of the views held by the general body of orthodox and Evangelical Christians, as might be expected from an intelligent, earnest, devout, and amiable Baptist minister, one of whose works we see is given to the public with the imprimatur of no less accomplished a divine than Mr. Spurgeon. Mr. Stock contends earnestly for the absolute Deity of the Son of God, and is none the less forcible for endeavouring to speak the truth without bitterness.

The two remaining publications are both by Unitarian Ministers. Mr. Higginson's "Six Essays" remind us of the more old-fashioned Unitarianism, that used to regard the defence of the outworks of Christianity as especially entrusted to itself. Indeed he expressly says:—"The older theological position was that of believing in *both* Natural and Revealed Religion, which some are still simple enough to regard as harmonious volumes of the Divine perfections and will. In these Essays I virtually re-state that position which it is the fashion of the day to evade or becloud, if not directly to deny." Those who are not content to judge of Unitarians merely from the representations of their opponents, could scarcely be referred to a more favourable specimen than Mr. Higginson. Unlike so many of his brethren, he is

more addicted to the positive than the negative. The miracles do not scare him; indeed, he earnestly defends them. In the Bible he still finds the word of God. Christ is, without any evasion, morally perfect, and truly his Lord. To us, indeed, Christ is unutterably more. We want, not so much a perfect man, a perfect specimen of what man can rise to be, or a perfect example of holy living; but our hearts yearningly cry with Philip, "Shew us the Father!" We want to see God, or if that cannot be, if He be of necessity "the invisible God," we want a perfect image of Him. Not man—though the model man—can content us; our heart and our flesh cry out for the Living God, and we find in Christ the answer to all our soul's need. At his feet our search is over, our pilgrimage is ended, we have found the "rest" our souls craved. Mr. Higginson does not see in Christ all we see but he reverences and loves and delights in all he does see, and is blessed thereby, and should we improve his vision by a well-delivered blow on the eye? By all our solicitude for those who have less truth (as we think) to receive more, we deprecate all that tends unrighteously to irritate and alienate. We are bound to say that the tone of Mr. Higginson's thoughtful *Essays* is highly creditable to him, and contrasts favourably with some of the pages we have animadverted on.

The little book of *Prayers* by Mr. Hopps, notwithstanding a tendency perhaps to prettiness and sentimentalism, may be helpful to even those Christians who might nevertheless be painfully conscious of deficiency if regarded as a full and complete manual of devotion. They might learn how much more there is to pray for than is commonly recognized, how many more things it is both legitimate and desirable to bring before Our Father in prayer. If the volume be used not so much as containing prayers to be repeated, and there an end, but as suggestive of some things too apt to be overlooked, it may be found helpful and quickening as a preparative to prayer. Mr. Hopps is a Unitarian, and therefore our Lord's life and death are not all to him that they are to us, but it is pleasant to kneel with all we can any how kneel with, although we may afterwards have to leave them "while we go and pray yonder."

The Prophet Jonah; His Character, and Mission to Nineveh. By Rev. HUGH MARTIN, M.A. London: Alexander Strahan. 1866.

WE shall give, perhaps, a fair idea of this volume if we quote a portion of the "Prefatory Note"—

"Some of my readers may think that I have—to use the language of an intelligent friend—'taken Jonah's part too much.' I can scarcely think that I have. It is a tacit tribute of honour that we pay to Prophets and Apostles, as still living powers in the Church, when we deny them the benefit of the maxim, *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*. But for that reason we ought to be all the more careful to do them no injustice. And when I think of his wonderful prayer in the depths,—of his perfect candour with the mariners,—of his magnanimity in prescribing his own death as the means of their deliverance,—and of his perfect candour with God also, in laying open

to Him to the last even all that was wrong in his startling and most sinful state of mind, I cannot help thinking that the memory of Jonah deserves more of esteem and affectionate regard than has fallen to his lot. To the last we find his gracious Lord 'not silent to him;' so that we see the prophet not left to 'become like them that go down into the pit.' And though Jonah has closed the book of his prophecy without telling us what effect the Lord's gracious remonstrance had in respect of bringing him to a better frame of mind,—thus in manifest humility, I think, consenting to disappear from our view as under a cloud,—Divine charity, 'believing all things,' will have little difficulty in believing that Jonah's silence, like that of Job, would have its meaning expressed by the protestation; —'Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no farther.'

Mr. Martin has given us on the whole a very acceptable series of discourses on the Prophet who, with many persons, stands almost as the type of a low kind of religion and of peevishness. The requirements of the sermon, however, will generally interfere somewhat with the continuity and restrictedness which might otherwise be desirable in an independent treatment of a subject. For the modern preacher—at all events if a Scotchman, and addressing a Presbyterian congregation—must "improve" Jonah, or any other Biblical personage, to a nineteenth century audience. This necessity sometimes leads to the introduction of possibly questionable matter. As, for instance, when Mr. Martin's supposed duty of harmonizing his happily freer utterances with the "standards" of the Free Church and the "Westminster Confession," leads him to interpolate (as we are almost ready to call it) doctrinal statements when they might very well be spared. Thus, doing justice to Jonah's ample confession to the sailors in the storm, he dwells admiringly on "the height of true moral grandeur to which Jonah at this moment rises;" he represents him as "calmly strong in righteousness—a mighty man of power rising above all impending evils;" and then, appealing to the reader, asks, "Are you *thus* upright before the Lord?" and proceeds to say, "You can do so only through the intervention of the great Atonement, and your faith therein. Never can you face all-righteousness till you flee to the cross of Jesus." Now, we trust we shall ever, as earnestly and thoroughly as men can, delight to magnify "the Lord our Righteousness:" but that is not the point. Mr. Martin has shown the thoroughness of Jonah's repentance, and the blessed strength in which he "faces all-righteousness," and then, to the modern reader, insists on the essentialness of a something which Jonah, at all events, was necessarily utterly ignorant of. For who pretends that the son of Amittai, eight centuries before Christ, looked at himself "in the light of the Cross?" We perceive, also, that Mr. Martin, in discoursing on Jonah, found it necessary to cast a stone at "the Broad School evasions of the Atonement." Evasions of a Truth are something more than sad; but if Mr. Martin will set himself to answer M'Leod Campbell's deeply thoughtful and holy work on the Atonement (for, for his purpose, Mr. C. must be included in his censure), he will do something that has not been achieved yet. However, we should be sorry to be misunderstood as disparaging in any degree a good book that it was well to publish.

Surrey Congregational History. By JOHN WADDINGTON, D.D.
London: Jackson, Walford & Hodder. 1866.

THIS book was prepared at the request of the Surrey Congregational Union, and is published, we presume, under the auspices of that body. This of itself, independently of Dr. Waddington's qualifications for the task, will ensure its being received with a hearty welcome. The First Part, of 142 pages, is of general interest; Part the Second will be more particularly appreciated by the churches of the district. It should be understood, however, that the term Congregational is used exclusively for one section of the Nonconformist churches; but if this term, which appears to be gradually displacing a former designation, is to be generally adopted, must it not be used inclusively of Baptist churches as well as those that used to be called Independent? Certainly, Independent—though all Dissenters know what alone is meant by it—is not the happiest conceivable designation for a Christian Church. And there is perhaps a growing conviction that in many quarters ours has been Independency run to seed. But, at all events, the term did not distinguish the "Pædo-baptist" from the (so-called) "Anti-pædo-baptist,"—or, more commonly speaking, "Baptist." None of the designations however are unexceptionable. And what is a Congregational Church? Dissenters for the most part make too sharp a distinction, possibly, between "the church" and "the congregation," so that there is room for the question we have asked—What is a *Congregational* Church? And how would one write it in New Testament Greek?

We observe that Dr. Waddington, in his notice of Clayland's Chapel, Clapham, and its minister, the Rev. J. Baldwin Brown, is of opinion that, "Perhaps he has suffered for want of more calm repose." "Calm repose" is a very fine thing certainly, and we wish it were rather more obvious to some of us how to secure it. But were there many intimations of this kind respecting living ministers, it might possibly, in the opinion of some, detract somewhat from the value of a historical work of considerable merit.

A Treatise on Homiletics. By DANIEL P. KIDDER, D.D. London: Hamilton, Adams, & Co. 1866.

DR. KIDDER observes, no doubt very truly, that "Ministers, like other men, need line upon line, and precept upon precept;" and this is evidently the fundamental principle upon which his book is written. His volume is an elaborate attempt systematically to expound "the true theory and practice of preaching the Gospel." He writes with unmistakable earnestness, and with a fair degree of ability. His work is enriched by some useful quotations and references, and by an Appendix giving a good list of authors of homiletical literature. It contains a considerable amount of sound practical advice and exhortation, and has also the advantage of being of moderate length and convenient size.

We close the book, however, feeling, as we felt before opening it, that the endeavour to set forth the art of preaching is beset with peculiar difficulties, and needs peculiar wisdom. The writer ought

not, by the mode in which he reduces every process necessary to the production of a good sermon to rule, to make us feel as though he were loading us with fetters. Nor ought he to remind us, as we confess Dr. Kidder sometimes does, of "The Complete Letter-Writer," and "The Book of Etiquette for Ladies and Gentlemen," by which some unknown, but doubtless well-behaved, members of the community are supposed to regulate their correspondence and their manners. Still, we gladly recognize the good spirit in which the book before us is written, and believe that many preachers may read it with much advantage. It may, however, be necessary to remind some that we should study the laws of homiletics as we study the laws of metre, remembering that the poetry makes the laws, not the laws the poetry; and that a good sermon is not merely an ingenious construction, but the living child of the preacher's brain and heart.

A Commentary on the whole Epistle to the Hebrews. Being the Substance of Thirty Years' Wednesday's Lectures at Blackfriars, London. By that holy and learned divine, WILLIAM GOUGE, D.D., &c. Vol. I. Edinburgh: James Nichol. 1866.

THIS is another volume of Nichols' series of Commentaries, and by no means the least worthy of re-publication. Dr. Gouge (born in 1575, died in 1653) was an eminent preacher and divine in days when solid learning and laborious study, with much prayer, were deemed, by many pastors and congregations alike, indispensable in preparations for the pulpit. There is a solidity, a thoroughness, a profound reverence for the least intimation of the Divine will, and a piety in that old Puritan divine which might make seven-tenths of modern pulpiteers hang down their heads with shame. It is true the times are changed, and there is not one congregation in a thousand now that would have patience with pastors or sermons fashioned on this model. But if sermons must perforce be slighter—(and only think of the awful number preached every Sunday)—and if the multitudinous demands on our ministers' time and attention make it impossible for them to bestow the pains-taking thought they envy their predecessors for enjoying—still, a not unfrequent reference to these older productions could not but be attended by valuable results. Dr. Gouge was deservedly famous among the great divines and preachers of his time; and though the two centuries that have passed since his death have given the modern Christian and student invaluable help towards the better understanding of the Scriptures, yet, still, there are very few who would not derive much benefit from an acquaintance with William Gouge.

The Gentle Philosopher; or Home Thoughts for Home Thinkers. London: James Blackwood & Co.

WE remember to have seen this little volume somewhere spoken of disparagingly, as owing its origin to an unfair remembrance of two other books, between which it was a sort of a cross. Possibly, the impression unconsciously derived from this intimation led us to postpone the examination of it; but on looking into it for ourselves, we feel disposed to welcome it as a book that it was worth while to write,

and which may well find an acceptable place in many of our home circles. We cannot all of us sit down as equals at the suppers of the gods. At all events, there are many readers who, at the close of the day's duties, are fain to seek rest and refreshment and help in books that will not unduly strain a mind wearied and harrassed, it may be, in many things;—to such, a volume of Essays like the present will be very acceptable, and to our young people it may be very honestly commended. If the "Gentle Philosopher" finds his way into the family sitting-room, or is allowed a chance of making himself known in a quiet *tête-à-tête*, we feel sure he will hold his own.

The Sermons of Mr. Henry Smith, &c. With a Memoir of the learned Author by THOMAS FULLER, B.D. In two vols. London: William Tegg. 1866.

WE believe many readers who have found it difficult to procure, except now and then and at a great price, these sermons of "the Silver-tongued Preacher," "the Chrysostom of his Age," will acknowledge a debt of gratitude to the publisher for thus reprinting these fine specimens of the best of the Puritan divinity. He was born about 1550, and died about 1600, or perhaps in 1593, and was greatly favoured by Elizabeth's Lord Treasurer, William Cecil (Lord Burleigh). His quaint old biographer, the famous Fuller, says, "His Church was so crowded with auditors that persons of good quality brought their own pews with them, I mean their legs, to stand thereupon in the alleys. Their ears did so attend to his lips, their hearts to their ears, that he held the rudder of their affections in his hand, so that he could steer them whither he pleased; and he was pleased to steer them only to God's glory and their own good." Henry Smith, while not caring to defend everything in the Church of England, yet remained in her communion, to which he was warmly attached, and earnestly counselled "Brownists and Barrowists to consider whence [by their separation therefrom] they had fallen." *Marsden* says of him, "No English preacher has since excelled in the proper attributes of pulpit eloquence." We heartily commend the publisher's enterprise to our readers.

An Exposition of the First Epistle of John. By JAMES MORGAN, D.D. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark. 1865.

DR. MORGAN is an able and venerable minister of the Presbyterian Church in Belfast. His Commentary on St. John's First Epistle consists of fifty-two lectures, making a goodly and substantial volume. He says, in the Preface, "This Epistle of John has not received the same amount of consideration that has been given to some other portions of the Divine Word. I am not aware of any lengthened exposition of it. I could find little human help in the study of it. But I sought only to know its meaning; and as I was led to see it, to write it in the plainest and simplest words I could command. There is no learned criticism, nor scholarly disquisition; but I count it better to say, 'I think that I have the spirit

of God' and 'the mind of Christ.'" This gives a fair impression of the tone and substance of the book. It is simple and clear, and gives evidence of the ripeness of the author's Christian character. The student, however, will look for something more concise and suggestive; the general reader, for something more attractive in style.

The Critical English Testament : being an Adaptation of Bengel's Gnomon, with Numerous Notes, showing the Precise Results of Modern Criticism and Exegesis. Edited by Rev. W. L. BLACKLEY, M.A., and Rev. JAMES HAWES, M.A. Vol. II. London: Alexander Strahan. 1866.

THIS volume, which takes us to the end of the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, justifies the strong commendation we have already given to the work. Here and there, indeed, we think the Editors might have omitted some of Bengel's remarks; which the altered circumstances of our day and country have made unimportant. A grave opinion on *wigs* for instance (in 1 Cor. xi. 7, &c.), is somewhat out of date. But there is not enough of this kind of thing to detract at all from the value of the book, which those private Christians and ministers who have not access to a good library will find to be very great. The Editors make constant reference to Tischendorf, Meyer, Alford, and others, and have, we think, very well discharged their editorial duties.

The Higher Ministry of Nature ; or, The Bearing of Creation on the Truth and Mission of Christianity. Seven Lectures by GEORGE S. INGRAM. London: Elliot Stock. 1865.

MR. INGRAM has collected many of the scripture passages in which fruits, flowers, trees, and grass, rocks, mountains, rivers, and seas, with the sun, moon, stars, and clouds, are mentioned; and, classifying them under the above heads, and commenting briefly on the incidents or thoughts in connection with which the bible-writers have mentioned them, seeks to awaken a deeper interest among young people in Nature, in the belief that the "higher ministry" will thus be as useful as pleasant. The little work bears evidence of an earnest desire to promote the welfare of those it addresses, and the worthy writer has evidently been thoroughly interested in his subject. It is pious and good, but we confess the title led us to expect, perhaps unreasonably, something suggestive of a still deeper insight into the spirit and heart of Nature. But it is a book we can honestly commend.

When were our Gospels written? An Argument by CONSTANTINE TISCHENDORF. With a Narrative of the Discovery of THE SINAITIC MANUSCRIPT. London: Religious Tract Society. 1866.

THE Religious Tract Society has done a good thing in publishing this brochure of Tischendorf's in pamphlet form, and at a price (a shilling) which places it within every body's reach. It is handsomely printed on large paper, with capital type, and everything invites one to read and ponder. It is one of the best things the Society has done, and we are gratified to be able to announce and draw attention to it.

The Romance of Mary Constant. Written by **HERSELF**. London: Saunders, Otley, & Co. 1866.

THE title-page bears as a motto the sentence from Eugénie de Guérin, "Hélas! Hélas! que les choses passent et les souvenirs demeurent," and it strikes the key-note of the volume, which, if not a page from real life, might very well be. The story is naturally told, with however here and there the prolixity and carelessness withal of a lady unaccustomed to authorship, or perhaps we should rather say unaccustomed to submit her composition to judicious censorship. By placing the scene of a good part of the story abroad, and the introduction of two or three very well sketched French characters, a pleasant novelty and freshness are secured, and we have no doubt *Mary Constant's Romance* will be a welcome addition to the literature of its class.

The Happy Man; or, The Essential Principles of Happiness described. By **REV. JOHN PUGH, B.A.** London: Elliot Stock. 1866.

A **LITTLE** book, of about one hundred and fifty pages (ten of which are devoted to the table of contents), written with a quaintness and precision of style amounting to pedantry. Imagine a little old man, with a mild, smooth-shaven face, and scrupulously neat although old-fashioned garments, calmly and soberly talking to a group of plain, sensible people. Everything that he says is very neatly arranged and carefully illustrated, and although sometimes common place and rather prosy, often shrewd and good. Imagine this, and you have Mr. Pugh's book, and the readers for whom it is suitable.

A Precious Saviour. By **HENRY JENNINGS, F.R.S.L.** London: Nisbet & Co. 1866.

The Heavenward Road. By **S. S. JONES.** Second Edition. London: F. Pitman. 1865.

THE first of these little books (prettily got up) reminds us of some addresses to which we have listened at Revival Prayer-meetings; doubtless well-meant, but excited in tone, somewhat incoherent, and besprinkled with sensational anecdotes. We doubt the usefulness of such addresses when spoken, and still more when printed.

"The Heavenward Road" contains advice about the way to Heaven. The writer may give young people good advice on this momentous subject; but it would be better not to be so eloquent, so ejaculatory, and so "goody." We recommend her to study Sarah Tytler's books.

Letters on the Social and Political Condition of the Principality of Wales. By **HENRY RICHARD.** London: Jackson, Walford, & Co.

THIS is a small book of great value, and we very heartily commend it to the attention of our readers, trusting it will have a large sale, which it abundantly deserves.

THE CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR.

DECEMBER, 1866.

THE ROUND TABLE.

CHAPTER XIII.

VISITS TO VENTNOR—TIME FLIES—GAUNT HOUSE AGAIN—STARTLING CHANGES—THE OCTAGON CHAMBER—FINIS.

AND Mr. Sydney came to Ventnor, and Edith and he met as they had never been used to meet. There was a respect, a deference, a courteousness in all his manner to her that now seemed as natural as the old freedom had been. It was nothing assumed, but perfectly sincere; the outcome of a quite new feeling towards her, which had been growing ever since that memorable morning when he had too abruptly offered her his hand, never dreaming there could be a moment's hesitation in the young girl who had known him so well, and of whose affectionate regard he was already assured. But by the way in which she received his proposals she had greatly risen in his esteem, and had unconsciously worked herself into a far deeper and holier place in his heart than she occupied when he first proposed to make her his wife. All that there had been of mild love towards her had not only greatly deepened, but had grown into a more passionate attachment. He had prematurely offered himself as her husband, now he was her lover. And on her part, there was a diffidence, a bashfulness, that was not painful, for it was blended with the power of a new affection, which—what would it not become in time, if the first dawnings of it were so pleasant?

And he came and went, seldom staying more than two or three days at a time. So that there were intervals in which Edith was

growing to be conscious of a blank, and to look forward to his return with a subdued and gentle but very self-evident longing. And so the winter months passed, and the spring came again, and the days were lengthening, and the hedges put on their fresh green livery, and the flowers appeared in the gardens; the fuschias promised clouds of flamingo blossoms, and the laburnums hung out their golden chains and looked as if they ought to be tenanted by canaries. And Edith and her lover rambled—I don't know where they did not ramble—for hours and hours together. And ever more and more he strangely identified her with "the May-flower," and she was the one desire of his heart, and it would not have been in the power of the fairest and noblest to become her rival.

And spring came, as we have said, and summer; and one evening in warm beautiful June they had strolled along through sweet Bonchurch, and had lingered in the graveyard of the small ancient church, where now John Sterling lies near to Mr. Adams, on whose flat tombstone a raised iron casts the shadow of the cross, and they had come out along the Undercliff towards Shanklin. And resting there on a bank fragrant with wild thyme, and with the hazel-bushes about them, and here and there a hawthorn tree one sheet of pure white blossom that shed its balmy loveliness on the air, he pressed her to fix the day which he had long been hoping and waiting for. And so one rich and glowing autumn morning saw Frank Sydney and Edith Langston stand side by side to exchange those vows which gave them to each other for richer and poorer, for better or worse, in sickness and in health, until death should part them. But time flies, and as if it carried the fatal scissors of Atropos it claims peremptorily to cut short my tale. For December is come, and though the writer had a thousand things to say about that Round Table at Gaunt House—(things which, at the particular stage of Christian development to which the nineteenth century, and God's providence, and human wisdom and folly, with its guesses and half-guesses, its truths and half-truths, and its regrets for the evermore impossible past, and its vague unshaped longings for a better future, have brought us, might be neither uninteresting nor without significance)—yet after to-day the Round Table must be a thing of the past. Well, we must all accept the inevitable; and so the writer must just drop into oblivion and nothingness the records of three precious years following that bridal morning.

Once more then, and now for the last time, let the reader revisit with us Gaunt House. Why, you will scarcely know the place again. The house and grounds are the same of course. But there is no sense of solitude now, I can tell you. There are

plenty of footsteps along the galleries and passages, plenty of voices at the hospitable board. On the seats under the Spanish and other oaks some groups may generally be found ; and on the banks of the stream there, down at the bottom of that gentle declivity, you will find two or three gentlemen in easy costume trying their hand at fly-fishing, for the trout which delight in that brook that rises among the chalk hills yonder, whose sides are covered with box and juniper and beeches, and fir, and yew-trees. None of the anglers very skilful, however, you may note ; more false casts than successful ones, anyhow. And no wonder ; they never were sportsmen, and are only trying it for amusement and the novelty of the thing. And here and there you may see, singly, with a book, or in twos and threes, those whose step is feebler and their countenances indicative of impaired health. What does it all mean ? Has any new and heavy calamity fallen on our old friends ? Has the old saying proved true about riches taking to themselves wings and fleeing away ? Has Sydney lost his Edith, as he years before lost "the Mayflower ?" or has the young bride laid aside for ever the garments it was so pleasant to wear, and taken instead the mournful attire of widowhood ? And where is the "Father, dear !" of our former pages ? Has Gaunt House changed hands, and become a sanatorium ? and are all our dear friends scattered, or dead ? Such changes three years may very well bring. But, no ; surely that is Edith yonder on the lawn—with—I declare—a wee thing that is holding to her fingers, and amusing himself—the little rogue !—with the daisies he is just able to pluck. And she has no black about her. But, see ; the little tot has left her side, and is tottering and tumbling along to greet—Papa ! And certainly that figure in easy attitude under the chestnuts, reading a pamphlet, pencil in hand, is Mr. Langston, who, blessings on him, looks more than ten years younger than when he entered that pulpit that we know of on one particular Sunday morning. See, he rises to greet us, and his step is firm, and there is peace in his countenance, and joy almost sparkles in his eyes ; yet he was sixty last birthday.

But these groups ? Well, guess. No—you can't ? Then I must tell you—but you might try. Come ! Well, I should have taken half a score of them to be parsons of some kind. Good ; of what kinds ? One scarcely knows ; two or three have the look of rather seedy curates, and one is an unmistakable vicar or rector ; and two or three I should say are Baptist brethren, decidedly. Well, go on. Yonder is a Friend, or Quaker, as some call them. And if this and that and yonder man is not an Independent minister, I won't trust my powers of discernment again. And still more confidently I pronounce those two, dressed wholly

in black, and with white cravats, Conference Methodists. The ladies, sir? The ladies; well—I could fancy most of them governesses out of situations, or out for their holiday.

And these guesses would not be very far from the actual truth.

"Edith, my love;" Sydney said one morning very soon after they had settled down "at home;" "this house and grounds and the property that has come to us we will hold not as ours but His who gave it, and we will be stewards simply under Him and for Him." And Edith's look of more than consenting admiration was the happy Amen to this blessed vow of consecration. And many were the plans he pondered, rejecting many of the most obvious, and adopting many singular ones that originated with himself. For he actually believed that to do the maximum of good with the minimum of waste and harm required as much thoughtfulness as any branch of study. Indeed, he looked on doing good as both a science and an art. I could devote pages upon pages to his notions on this subject, and the methods he observed. But space shuts me up to only that one which is immediately connected with the title of my tale.

Not long after that avowal of his wish and design which we mentioned just now, he wrote to a number of ministers of different denominations, whose acquaintance he had formerly made in various parts of the country, inviting them to come and spend a few weeks at Gaunt House, choosing their own time. And he asked each in his letter of invitation if he knew any worthy Christian man, cleric or layman, out of health, to whom such a change of air and scene would be serviceable. And one thing led to another, till, by-and-by, his house, like another we read of, "was furnished with guests." In his wanderings he had often been struck with the appearance and manner of many of the ministers of religion, as indicative of a pressing need of rest and recreation. Seven out of ten, he thought, seemed below par as to physical condition, and he had been greatly impressed by it. Something to take them thoroughly out of themselves—out of their life-long grooves, he thought, was more absolutely essential in such a day as this than ever before. And, as he could not preach himself, it occurred to him that if he could help, in ever so small a way, to enable those who could to do their work for a time in better heart, he should be doing something towards the great common end. And by the time we are paying our present visit to Gaunt House, three years nearly after the marriage, it was become quite the rule to have from fifteen to twenty such visitors; who, after the first hour or two, found themselves thoroughly at home, and felt in themselves, "Ah, this will do me a world of good: how genial and happy it all is!" Edith too had been prompted to do the same sort of thing with poor friendless

governesses, or any others of her sex to whom a few weeks' residence in such a home would be the kind of thing they just needed. The amount of various good delicately done in this way to a class of workers who, from their education and culture and position, and the character of their duties, combined with, commonly, very straitened circumstances, need more than others frequent change for both body and mind, was no doubt very great. At all events Sydney and his wife hoped so.

In fine weather there was of course no lack of means of pleasant recreation. The park with its various attractions; the stream, almost a river; the beautiful country around, with woods in the lowlands, and yonder not so very far off the purple moors, while within an easy drive was the sea itself. There were safe horses for riding; serviceable little pony-chaises for invalids or ladies. In the season the gentlemen might shoot, if they chose to try their hand at that not altogether Nonconformist sport. The more the pity perhaps. A few hour's shooting now and then over the fields on a bracing day in early winter would do many a pale-faced dyspeptic minister a world of good; and if his sermons were not all the better for it,—why then say John and Peter would have been all the more spiritual if they had not been fishermen.

But in such a home, and with such groups assembled as we have seen, you may be sure that the intellectual and the literary, and especially the religious, could not be forgotten or laid aside.

The octagon chamber was a favourite place of resort, especially on hot summer afternoons, or when winter weather confined the company to the house. Often the dessert was laid there; the large Round Table being found so favourable to general conversation, that on Sunday afternoons it was almost a custom to adjourn thither. And very pleasant it was to note the varieties of religious opinion that were often represented by the different guests, sitting so amicably side by side, and enjoying the rare opportunity of finding how much substantial unity and Christian brotherhood there can be without uniformity of opinion on secondary matters. Members of all the larger denominations of Protestant Christians were always sure to be there, while now and then there was fresh zest given to the easy intercourse by the presence of one or two Roman Catholic friends of the host.

It was an understood thing, however, that the temporary union thus effected among members of so many varieties of church was not based on the avoidance of all those matters on which they mutually differed. Somehow, Mr. Sydney and Mr. Langston had early succeeded in giving a tone to the ever-shifting elements of

the society at Gaunt House, so that, without any formal regulations, every fresh visitor seemed as if instinctively to fall in with it. I regret that I have not space at command for naturally exhibiting the tone I refer to, by reporting at some length some of the conversations and discussions that took place at that Round Table. The utmost allowed to me is just to condense into a most unsatisfactory summary some of the remarks that were early made. Thus, for instance, one afternoon in particular, I remember, the conversation had been for a time desultorily carried on by individuals sitting near each other, without becoming general, till gradually one voice after another dropped, and the rest of the company found themselves listening to two or three who were talking with the host on the varieties of religious opinion, and some of the ill results of the too wide separation of the Churches, and their mutual isolation and jealousies, and interference with each other's local success, and often their practical antagonism.

"Well," said Mr. Sydney, "I scarcely know the Christian Church that I could not very conscientiously join, if circumstances seemed to make it on any account desirable. I have spent holy hours in an English cathedral, not deeming myself called on to inquire too anxiously whether the singing men and choristers were realizing the (to me) grand expressions of worship they were engaged in. I have listened to famous University preachers, and thanked God that such men were; some of them men to whom all the twelve Apostles might have listened with wonder and delight." Here two or three clergymen present gently nodded their heads approvingly. "And I have turned into little ugly whitewashed places, on out-of-the-way commons, and heard some zealous 'local' tell poor neglected and ignorant country-folks of the love of Christ, and insist on the need of individual redemption from present evil, till I have forgotten all about rules of grammar or nice pronunciation, and I have blessed God from my heart for the mighty work that Methodism has done in our land." Here two or three plain men, with rather decided features, and no collars above their white neck-ties, looked approvingly at the speaker. "And, occasionally," he continued, "I have sought out, for quietness' sake, and the sense of silent communion, the Friends' Meeting House, and sat with a small group of staid plainly-dressed men and women, till the very silence has been more precious than, at the time, any speech could be; and one realized the blessedness of not trying hard, by strenuous personal effort, to lift one's-self up to God, but simply waiting on God, and passively letting Him come near, and fill the soul with His holy presence. For my own part, I fancy that most of the Churches

need to learn and receive of one another ; and I have often wished that the zealous Methodist, for instance, who lives so much in action and in the atmosphere of religious excitement, could sometimes enter thoroughly into the spirit of the more religious Friends." A Quaker gentleman, who was present, an elderly man of most benevolent aspect, looked sedately at the table, and seemed to be considerably retired into himself, and full of quietness.

"I have been present several times," Mr. Sydney continued ; for gentlemen near him seemed to be prompting him to go on with his remarks, now and then asking him a question or two directly, and it was in answer to such that he spoke what follows :—"I have been present several times when our Baptist friends have observed the ordinance from which they take their name, and as one of them has just asked me for my frank opinion, I will give it. When the ordinance has been administered by a man of manifest piety, and the assistant deacons and attendants have been quiet and devout in manner, and the candidates have behaved with befitting decorum, evidently realizing the profound significance of the ordinance, and it has not been turned into a spectacle, or regarded as a local controversial triumph, but all has been holy, I have thought it very impressive, and felt that so decided an act might be a very valuable *terminus à quo* for the convert thus consciously baptized into the threefold name. At the same time, to speak candidly, since I am asked, I confess I have seen the ordinance so administered that I think anyone would be excusable for regarding it as more honoured in the breach than the observance."

"I quite agree with you there," said the gentleman who had called forth the remark. "I quite agree with you, Mr. Sydney. But you know the one question is—not what a refined taste, or modern notion of conventional propriety may deem fitting, but—what is truth ? what is the Lord's will ?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Sydney, "I am well aware of the ground which you take. But I am sure you will pardon the remark that all Christian Churches alike, and all Christian men alike, profess to make their appeal to truth, however they may differ as to the tribunal whence the judgment is to proceed, or the shrine where the one oracle speaks."

"Yes, they profess," rejoined the other ; with an emphasis on the verb which implied that he did not set much store by their profession.

"My dear Sir," continued Mr. Sydney, "surely we are bound to take a Christian man's own profession of what it is he means. I readily and thoroughly believe all you allege of your loyalty to truth, and your single wish to know and do only what truth

enjoins. But why am I not to give equal credit to every other representative of a different Church? Honestly I say that in my studies of Church history, and my intercourse with almost all sections of the Church, I have not found in any one of those sections a monopoly of honesty, or of intelligence, or goodness; perhaps not in any a predominance, even."

"But," suggested another at the table, "if we are to admit that all the much differing and often antagonistic Churches are alike in honesty and piety, and that there is so much to be said for all, are we not in some danger of confounding truth and error, or, at all events, of slurring the lines of demarcation?"

"There is always danger, and on all sides, no doubt," remarked Mr. Langston. "As the love of truth may degenerate into narrowest sectarianism, and lead a man unawares into most enormous individualism and utter separateness, so charity may degenerate into a most pernicious liberalism and indifferentism. But I sincerely trust it is possible to avoid both right-hand and left-hand deflections. It must be possible for truth and charity to dwell together. Nay, it may be questioned whether either will consent to dwell apart."

Here another gentleman, who had not yet spoken, "begged that Mr. Langston would kindly state how he thought this comprehensive tolerance which was suggested might be harmonized with that stern regard to truth alone which the general conscience could not but put in the first place. First righteousness, and then peace."

Mr. Langston said, "I have been for so many years identified with one particular denomination, and that too as a minister, that I should prefer the question should be answered by a layman; and I beg to be allowed to pass it on to Mr. Sydney, who has never yet, I think, identified himself with any one church in particular by actual membership."

The company generally backing the proposal, Mr. Sydney said that his chief objection to complying was derived from the fact that the very briefest outline of his views on such a subject would occupy far too much time, and also place him in the very false position of almost seeming to teach, where there were so many from whom he deeply felt how much he might learn. But being pressed he began:—

"It is now some time since I was impressed with the conviction, that—as a Church can live only by virtue of its hold on truth, in spite of the errors, perhaps grievous, that were held in combination—our wisdom would be to try and find out, not so much the errors, as the truths which the different Churches were put in trust with for the good of the whole. I find that too many Christians in the present day ask, not, What is Truth!

with Pilate, but, What is Error? They seem to me so zealous in detecting error, and then denouncing it as heresy, that they have little time or appetite for the nobler and happier quest. Perhaps it is a weakness of mine, perhaps I am very wrong, but somehow so it is, that I look out for what is good and true in a Christian and a Church, rather than for what is questionable. Indeed, I confess myself sadly deficient in one of the much valued Church-senses—I have not the fine nose of the heresy-hunter. And I confess that I neither wonder at the number and variety of Churches, nor much blame any of them for their persistence in being. I even think that in the present actual state of things they are most of them, if not indeed all, inevitable and a necessary good and evil. Their action and re-action on one another could perhaps ill be spared as yet. It is quite a commonplace, of course, that each Church began with the maintenance of some neglected truth, or opposition to some cherished error. In this was its *raison d'être*. That then each Church took to exaggerating its own special truth, till other truths were dwarfed by it, overlaid, and cast into the shade, while at the same time it lost sight of or even denied the truth hidden in the error it protested against, is also a commonplace. And if this be so, I and many others herein find our justification in giving the hand, as opportunity allows, to all, while identifying ourselves exclusively with none; content, till a better day shall dawn, with the common all-embracing name of Christian.

“I wonder at no born Churchman in the present day deliberately remaining in the Church of his fathers. Two things the Churchman urges, which his Nonconformist brother too little heeds. The first is the fact that, in this Great Britain of ours, Christianity has for more than twelve hundred years developed itself as history shows. To go no farther back than Augustine, thus—and not otherwise—it has been; and it is idle to quarrel with the past, equally idle to ignore it. Theoretically right or wrong, this is what in God's providence has been; and the Englishman who does not choose to cut himself off from the relation finds himself a member of a Church whose history reckons by centuries, and which was for long the only Church in these realms. Then he is not without his scriptural satisfaction too. For, studying the Book, he finds that God is as much the author of the nation as He is of the family, and thinks that as there should be a family recognition of God, so also a national —.” Here there were some slight, though courteous, manifestations of dissent—but he continued:—

“I think the general principle may be admitted in the abstract,—and as a general principle merely,—without its being understood to involve that any particular embodiment and

manifestation of it is wise, or even tolerable. And I was going to say that, while the thoughtful Churchman thus thinks, and feels himself entrenched on strong ground; yet, so palpable and so enormous are the anomalies and the evils which the National Church has incorporated with her very being, that I can neither wonder at nor regret the rise of a thoroughly antagonistic Nonconformity, which has been as great a blessing to the nation as ever the Church has been. It would be an evil day for England if the sun of Nonconformity were to go prematurely down. In the face of so many utterly unscriptural things that go to make part and parcel of the National Church, all honour, I say, to the men who, foregoing all this world's favour, drew forth their New Testaments, and protested in the name of the Lord against all that was contrary to His will, all that was opposed to the simplicity that is in Christ. I think the Nonconformist can far more easily justify himself out of the four Gospels, and the Apostolic Epistles (if they are the only source of guidance and authority) than the Churchman; and ill indeed could he have been spared from either the religious or the political history of the country."

Here the speaker paused. But the assembled guests begged him to proceed, and, after a little interchange of remark with one another, he again complied—

"In like manner, coming on to the particular Churches, I cannot any more wonder at the doctrinal differences which form the basis of several. Take Calvinism, for instance; not indeed as caricatured by ignorant men, whether friends or opponents, but as held by thoughtful Christians. It is such a complete work of human intellect, so compact and hard and water-tight, as to have extorted the admiration of even such thorough outsiders as Lessing, for example; while its crystalline clearness and hardness have at the same time excited a natural and desirable antagonism, which it would have been a great calamity to miss. I take it both the Calvinist and his opponent have each a partial hold on deep and fundamental truths, or half-truths rather, perhaps. Possibly the truth is too grand, too vast, too subtle, too vitally flexible, to be compressed into any system, to be congealed into unchangeable formulas.

"As to ordinances. When the Baptist sees how much evil has grown out of the merging of the individual in the mass, is it to be wondered at that he should make an earnest stand for individualism in religion? that he should insist on the personal? and that his eye should rest, perhaps even disproportionately, on those things in the New Testament which seem to justify him, and that he should press for some authoritative precedent before he consents to the indiscriminate admission of children into the

Church? It appears to me that much that he pleads ought to be conceded;—much, but not all. For when others are led to recognize the sacredness as well as tenderness of the family relation, the ties that knit parent and child, who can wonder that the mighty parental instinct and yearning should prompt to an anxious scrutiny of the Scriptures for that which—shall not only warrant the father in placing his child side by side with himself in the Church—but shall thereby also additionally justify itself as proceeding from the author of the relation and of the yearning? And then, who can wonder that stress should be laid on the close connection, from the very beginning in patriarchal times, of the child with the father in the relation to God? or, that the baptizer of infants should plead that, in view of all that had been, he must have a distinct warrant for the omission and refusal before he concedes it?”

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I am sorry that space is wanting for the record of many other things spoken in this spirit. But on this and other occasions all the chief churches of the day, with their specialities, were kindly and freely touched on, and with the effect too of bringing their various representatives then present much nearer together. Indeed, after the conversation which ensued when Mr. Sydney brought his free observations to a close, one of the guests asked why they, then sitting together at that Round Table, should not, with the easy freedom of the early Churches, observe the ordinance of the Lord's Supper there and then. And, strange to say, the face of the Friend even brightened at the proposal, and he said,—

“Friend Sydney, I thank thee for thy remarks, and for thy hospitality, and for bringing us together thus. Truly my spirit is refreshed, and I feel in unity with thee and with thy guests, and am permitted to feel free to break bread with thee and my other friends here.”

And sitting there at that Round Table, with none first and none last, not even any *primus inter pares*, but passing the extemporized elements from one to the other, as if all constituted one family, the various guests ate and drank, and meditated on that Life, and Death, and Resurrection, which should make all who believe therein one in their common Lord. . . .

They were loath to separate. They had shaken hands with one another cordially, and many a manly eye was moist with an almost new affection. And still they lingered. Twilight was stealing over the landscape. The evening star was beginning to be discernible through that oriel that looked to the West. And still the blessed feeling of unity detained them in the chamber that seemed to remind them of that ancient “guest chamber,”

where once a certain passover was eaten. Then Mr. Sydney spoke again :—

“ My friends, I know not how to express my gratitude to God and to you for this blessed hour. From my heart I thank you, for honouring my place with your presence. One thought comes to me again, vividly and powerfully, which I have often had ; and, with your kind permission, I will so far still intrude as to give it utterance. Here we are, members of most of the Christian Churches of the land. We have, during these pleasant days, freely interchanged our mutual convictions ; and this with the effect, not of increasing our mutual distance, but actually lessening it. Would it not be a blessed thing if there could be for a time, a sort of “ God’s truce ” with all Churches ?—and that, instead of seeking to justify ourselves, and convince our brother that he is all wrong and we are all right, we should try to understand each other’s position better, and see with each other’s eyes ? Would it not be well, for a time, and by way of experiment, (surely legitimate) that we should all seek to find out how much truth there is in an antagonistic system ?—so that, without giving up one iota of what we have, we may perhaps come to possess more ; or, at all events, learn the happy art of respecting and loving those from whom we still may feel compelled to differ ? If something like this Round Table experience could be enjoyed all over the land, I fancy it would be for pure unmixed good alone. But though, perhaps, that cannot be, we may, at all events, all unite in the holy resolve that all of us in our several circles will do our utmost to try and bring Christians of all Churches nearer together. King Arthur, if the fanciful conceit may be pardoned, instituted the Round Table of ancient chivalry. The knights were all one and equal. The table was round, that there might be no dispute for priority, and no rivalry, and no jealousy. I have no idea of the design with which this Round Table here was constructed in this peculiar chamber ; but if, from the conversations we have held, and the intercourse we have enjoyed, and the ordinance we have observed together, we can, when the time for parting comes, separate with the resolve I have mentioned, we and many others everywhere may have reason to bless God that we ever sat together at this Round Table.”

He ceased, and one of the guests rose and said ;—

“ Why cannot we who are here present before God, each one resolve, in his own heart, henceforth, to do all in our power to promote the reign of Christian brotherhood ? The day for “ orders,” especially among Protestants, has passed ; but without vows, without rules, without a formal embodiment, why should we not quietly regard ourselves as a brotherhood, and labour to

bring others into unity with us in this matter? Let us consider ourselves Christians of the Order of the Round Table."

The word fell on prepared hearts, and seemed as one of those apples of gold in baskets of silver that Solomon spoke of. "Good—good," exclaimed some. "Amen," said others, in a tone of devoutness. And they hoped that the happy word would prove a seed-word, that would live and bring forth fruit. And they resolved that, in their future intercourse with Christians and Churches, they would bear in mind that their own relation to their true king might in some of its aspects be very well illustrated by the relation of Arthur's knights to himself, and, thinking also of the way in which St. John, in the Apocalypse, represents God's chivalry, they determined to cherish in their hearts the idea of being

CHRISTIANS OF THE ORDER OF THE ROUND TABLE.

THE PROVERBS AND THE PRAYER OF AGUR.

TRANSLATION.

1. Words of Agur, son of Jakeh—even the Oracle: the man spake unto Ithiel, to Ithiel and Ucal.

2. Surely I am more stupid than a man, and I have not a man's understanding.

3. I have neither learned wisdom, nor have I the knowledge of that which is holy.

4. Who hath ascended into heaven, and descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in his garment? Who hath fixed all the boundaries of the Earth? What is His name, and what is His Son's name? Dost thou know?

5. Every word of God is pure: He is a shield to them that put their trust in Him.

6. Add thou not to His words, lest He rebuke thee, and thou be found a liar.

7. Two (things) have I requested of Thee : withhold them not from me before I die :

8. Remove vanity and lies far from me : give me neither poverty nor riches ; feed me with food proportioned to my need :

9. Lest I be full, and belie myself, and say, " Who is Jehovah ? " or lest I be poor, and steal, and profane the name of my God.

10. Accuse not a servant to his master, lest he curse thee, and thou be found guilty.

11. A generation that curse their father and do not bless their mother !

12. A generation pure in their own eyes, yet not washed from their filthiness !

13. A generation, how proud are their eyes, and their eyelids lifted up !

14. A generation whose teeth are swords, and whose incisors knives, to devour the poor off the Earth and the needy from men !

15. The Leech has two daughters—Give, Give. There be three which are never satisfied, yea, four which say not " Enough ! "

16. Hades ; the barren womb ; the Earth not filled with water ; and the fire, say not " Enough ! "

17. The eye that mocketh at father and disdaineth to obey mother, the ravens out of the valley shall peck it out, and the young vultures shall eat it.

18. There be three which are too wonderful for me, yea four which I know not :

19. The way of an eagle through the air ; the way of a serpent on a rock ; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea ; and the way of a man with a maiden.

20. So too the way of an adulteress ; she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, " I have done no wrong. "

21. Under three the earth trembleth, and under four can it not hold up :

22. Under a servant when he rules ; and a fool when he is full of meat ;

23. Under an odious woman when she is married; and a handmaid who is heir to her mistress.

24. There be four on Earth which are little, but very wise:

25. The ants are not a strong people, yet they prepare their food in the Summer;

26. The hyraxes, though a feeble folk, make their houses in the rock;

27. The locusts have no king, yet they go forth in ordered bands;

28. The lizard (only) layeth hold with her feet, and (yet) is in king's palaces.

29. There be three (things) which go lordlily, yea, four move with comeliness:

30. The lion, who is a hero among beasts, and turneth away from none;

31. The hound; the he-goat also; and a king in the midst of his people.

32. If thou hast foolishly lifted up thyself, or if thou hast planned evil,—Thine hand on thy mouth.

33. Verily, the pressing of milk bringeth forth curds, and the pressing of the nose bringeth forth blood; so the pressing of wrath bringeth forth strife.—PROVERBS XXX.

NOTES.

Verses 1—6.—Ewald has a strange, and, as I think, an utterly untenable theory of this passage. Its object is, he says, to express the value of a completed Revelation. The Poet is full of peace and tranquil faith; but he looks round on some who, proud and self-centred, are alienated from Revelation, and on others, "the sophists of an evil life," who look down on it, and seek to deny it. To show how evil such a state of mind is in comparison with the peace of faith, the Poet suffers a profligate to speak out what is in his dark and foolish mind (verse 2—4) to one who is named, as if with significance, Ithiel and Ucal,—“God with me,” and “I am strong.” This believer, the Poet himself, for Ithiel and Ucal are only symbolic names of Agur, replies by affirming (verses 5, 6) that only he can answer these sceptical arguments who trusts in “that sure and clear Revelation of God which purifies from the doubts of sense, and which, as it is already complete and satisfying, must neither be added to nor diminished.”

This, in brief, is Ewald's theory. It is open to the following fatal objections:—

1. Ithiel and Ucal were, in all probability, as Gesenius maintains, "the children or disciples of Agur to whom he addressed his instructions," and not significant names of the Poet.
2. "The *man*" who spake to Ithiel and Ucal could hardly be an unbelieving profligate, the sophist of an evil life, since the Hebrew נָכָר, like the Latin *vir*, is an honourable designation.
3. The emphatic confession of ignorance in verses 2, 3, is not at all in the strain of a sceptic; it is rather that of a humbler self-distrusting believer.
4. The expression of scepticism in verse 4 is surely about the most mild and ineffective ever uttered.
5. And, lastly, the answer to it, in verses 5, 6, is still milder and more unsatisfactory.

On the whole, I think we must give "the profligate" theory up, and be content with the exegesis which makes Agur the speaker throughout.

Verses 18—20.—The subject of these verses, says Ewald, is the violation of marriage vows. Many things are hard to be understood, as, for instance, how an eagle, a serpent, and a ship move on their several tracks; but it is still harder to understand how a man should be enticed by a harlot, and, hardest of all, how a woman, under a mask of innocence, can become an adulteress.

Ewald's interpretation is very questionable. The meaning, if this be the meaning of the verses, is surely expressed in a very laboured and feeble way. Moreover, the word he would render "harlot" is עֲלִזָּה, which high authorities insist carries the strict meaning of "virgin." It is the word used in Isaiah vii. 14, "*A Virgin shall conceive.*" The true interpretation of this passage is probably lost. That suggested on p. 738 is I suspect, too Western and modern in its tone, but seems quite as near the mark as most: it is, I think, an allowable adaptation, and has at least this advantage—that it is "pure."

Verse 26.—The *Hyrax Syriacus* is "a gregarious animal of the class Pachydermata, which is found in Palestine, living in the caves and clefts of the rocks, and has been erroneously identified with the rabbit. Its colour is grey or brown on the back, white on the belly; it is like the Alpine marmot, scarcely of the size of the domestic cat, having long hair, a very short tail, and round ears. It is very common in Syria, especially on the ridges of Lebanon."—Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," Art: Coney.

Verse 31.—"The hound" may be "the zebra," or "the war-horse," or, as Maurer supposes, "the wrestler." The word means simply that which is girdled or girthed, as the zebra with stripes, the war-horse with trappings, the hound with visible rib-bones, and the wrestler with his belt.

Verses 32, 33.—The sense here, which is somewhat obscure, appears to be—If thou hast been carried away with pride, or brooded evil against thy neighbour, be silent; rule thyself: do not press and inflame thy wrath, lest it blaze out in open strife.

Verse 33.—There is a characteristic Rabbinical play here on the word נֶסֶח which in the singular means *nose*, but in the dual form נֶסֶחַ means *wrath*.

EXPOSITION.

In what sense can we call this Book of Proverbs an inspired book? Do its maxims, for the most part, express a wisdom beyond that of the unassisted human intellect? These are grave questions, yet questions which are forced upon us by every fresh perusal of the book. They are questions which should be fairly met. There is a generation—O, how humble are their eyes, and their eyelids turned down!—who decline to use their common sense on the various books of Scripture, who listen with equal unintelligent reverence to the words of bad men and of good, and attach no less weight to the utterances of “them of old time” than to the instructions of Christ and His Apostles. They make their humility a cloak for the indolence which will not be at the pains to study and to distinguish between things that differ, and by a pretended reverence for the Word of God defeat the very end for which it was given. Scripture gains nothing by our affectation of believing that about it which runs contrary to the plain dictates of common sense,—Scripture gains nothing, and we lose much. And it would be in opposition to the very plainest dictates of common sense were we to affect to believe that these Proverbs, or many of them, were inspired in anything like the same sense in which the profound spiritual utterances of St. Paul and St. John are inspired. What uninspired man of business, for instance, might not have uttered the maxim,* “He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it?” To what student who has ever picked up an old book at a stall for a tithe of its value, to what woman who has ever bought “a remnant” “dirt cheap” at the draper’s, will this picture† be unfamiliar, “Nought, nought! saith the buyer: but when he is gone his way then he boasteth?” Do we need an angel out of heaven to teach us that,‡ “Better is a dry morsel and quietness therewith than a house full of good cheer with strife;”§ or that, “It is better to dwell alone in a corner of the roof than with a brawling woman in a spacious house?” Personal observation, if not personal experience, may surely have taught us so much as that. So, again, when Solomon tells us that,|| “the poor is hated even of his own neighbour, but the rich hath many friends,” is he announcing the discoveries of any very special wisdom? Nay, if it be true that a poor man’s poor neighbours hate him for his poverty, is it not equally and more commonly true that they sympathize with him and help him? Are not the poor famous

* Proverbs xi. 15.

† Proverbs xx. 14.

‡ Proverbs xvii. 1.

§ Proverbs xxv. 24.

|| Proverbs xiv. 20.

for their kindness to the poor, and for the sacrifices they make to serve one another?

Here, then, are five maxims, taken quite at random, from the Book of Proverbs; and I suppose there is not an intelligent man in England who could not both prove some of them to be only partially true, and match them with English proverbs quite as wise and quite as true to experience. How then can we claim for the Hebrew proverbs an inspiration which we deny to the English proverbs?

There is a familiar Latin proverb—*Vox populi, vox Dei*—with which, could we accept it as true, we might easily cut the knot of our difficulty; we might say, "The voice of the people is the voice of God; and therefore all maxims which embody the popular wisdom, English as well as Hebrew, are to be regarded as divine utterances." But, alas, the proverb is not true. How can the voice of the people be the voice of God while so many of the people are "at enmity against God?"

We must therefore find another solution of the difficulty. And the true solution seems to be,—That just as in the Books of Kings and Chronicles we have a true record of the external history of the Jews, so in this Book of Proverbs, as in other sacred writings, we have an accurate report of their internal history—a true account of their judgment on the facts and circumstances amid which they lived. From this Book of Proverbs we may learn, and are intended to learn, what their theory of human life was when they were most capable of arriving at a true theory; we may learn under what intellectual forms they conceived the facts of our common human experience, and what course and manner of life they regarded as, on the whole, the wisest and the best. Just as the historical writers were inspired to give a true account of what transpired in this reign or that, so Solomon was inspired to give a true and accurate account of what the Hebrew people *thought* in his time—of what moral rules they inferred for their guidance from the facts transpiring around them. And just as, when we read the true histories, we are left to form our own judgment of men and events, to pronounce this man good and that man bad, this action virtuous and that dubious or even wicked; so also, in reading the true report of the ethical maxims which gave shape to the thought and conduct of Solomon's subjects, we are left to form our own judgment, to say, "That is a wise noble thought, and this a doubtful, perhaps ignoble, thought." In reading the historical books we could make no graver mistake than to infer that we may *do* whatever we find men doing there; and, in like manner, in reading the Book of Proverbs it would be the gravest of mistakes to suppose that we may *think* whatever men thought then, and that our

views of life and duty are to be cramped within those ancient and too narrow forms. In fine: Solomon was inspired to give an accurate expression to the Hebrew wisdom and morality of his day, not to reveal the highest wisdom or the absolute morality. "This," he seems to say to us,—“This was our experience of the facts of life, and this what we thought about them;” but he nowhere says “*All* the facts were before us, and we were infallible; our inferences are the only correct inferences, and therefore you are bound to think as we thought.”

And of one thing we may be very sure, viz: that if we read the Proverbs of the Wise King with an understanding heart, we shall not only gather from them many beautiful statements of familiar truths, but shall also find that the main scope and tenor of the Book—its preference of wisdom over folly, goodness over wealth, and even of unlucky righteousness over successful ill-doing—exactly accords with the last and most perfect revelation of the wisdom of God. Here and there, indeed, we may light on counsels of earthly prudence rather than the maxims of heavenly wisdom, on the caution that calculates issues and takes the safer course rather than the holy courage which does right in scorn of consequence; and, if we are men in understanding, we shall gladly and freely exercise our understanding upon them; but, on the whole, we shall find abundant reason to acknowledge that, despite our better culture and ampler revelation, the Hebrews who honestly and habitually used these Proverbs, if any such there were, were wiser and better men than we.

So much it seemed well to say on Solomon's Proverbs, on his wisdom and inspiration, before passing to our special theme, the Proverbs and the Prayer of Agur.

I. Bishop Pontoppidan's famous chapter on the Snakes of Norway—"There are none"—would be the very model for a chapter on the history of Agur. For no one knows who he was, or what he was, where he was born, how he lived, or when he died. Our sole record of him is this chapter full of maxims, which he either uttered or "sought out and set in order." There is not, I believe, a single item of information to help us in forming a conception of the man, save such as may be gathered from "the words" which he has left behind him.

But words reveal character; they are, therefore, fair criteria of judgment. And, inferring Agur's character from his words, we should not perhaps pronounce it a very noble one, though there must have been fine qualities in it; if his "words justify," they also, in some sense, "condemn" him. From his cast of thought, and from certain peculiarities of diction, it seems well nigh certain that he lived a long while—some centuries even—

after King Solomon. Assuredly there is a great falling off in the Proverbs which bears his name from those which bear the name of the Wise King. In the Proverbs of Solomon we have the ripe catholic wisdom of a rich and largely-experienced nature; in "the Words of Agur," we have the scholastic sectarian utterances of a mind which thought more of form than substance, which aimed at precision rather than depth, which occupied itself with classification rather than discovery, exposition rather than experiment, with the niceties and curiosities of speech rather than the audacities of original thought. There is, as we shall see, an ineradicable strain of pedantry about the man, an affected precision and emphasis which clearly denote the *Rabbinical* order of intellect, which mark him out as the precursor of those Scribes who, in our Lord's time, tried to hide a narrow forehead behind a broad phylactery, and were so busy burnishing the cup of "the letter," that they forgot to drink the wine of "the spirit." Agur's words are too large for his thoughts; they promise more than they yield. He disappoints our just expectations, and that again and again.

As we open his little Book of Proverbs, we endeavour to recal the past. Across the gulf of many centuries there rises before us, in dim outline, the figure of a venerable Hebrew sage, his white beard flowing to his girdle. He lifts his hand, and opens his lips. We hush ourselves into a composed and listening reverence. Words float to us across the abyss in deep sepulchral tones. "What—*what* does he say? What secret of antique wisdom does he disclose?" His words are these:— "Surely the pressing of milk bringeth forth curds; and the pressing of the nose bringeth forth blood; so the pressing of wrath bringeth forth strife." Now, that is very disappointing—is it not? Instead of a deep secret of heavenly wisdom, such as we were expecting, we get only a mere platitude expressed in a grave form of words, and illustrated by figures, one of which, to our modern taste, is somewhat coarse and vulgar.

But let us listen again.† "There be three which go lordlily; yea, four move with comeliness." Ah, *that*, we think, sounds more like an oracle; it is an opening full of promise. What may these four comely things be? "The lion, who is a hero among beasts, and turneth away from none; the hound; the he-goat also; and a king, in the midst of his people." Now, is there any need to evoke a spirit through twenty-five centuries to tell us that? Who could not add another four, or forty, if needful, to this list of comely creatures? as, for instance, A tiger, which is at once stronger and more graceful in its "going" than

* Verse 22.

† Verses 29—31.

a lion,—A tiger, a leopard, a stag also, and a maiden whose beauty none can resist. What moral purpose is served by a mere catalogue of lithe comely creatures? Why are a lion, a hound, a goat, and a king, preferred above all others? And why is a lion described as “a hero” among beasts, and as “turning away from none,” when, as Dr. Livingstone and other travellers assure us, the lion is a mere cur who never fights if he can run away?

But listen to the Hebrew sage once more.* “There be four on earth which are little, but very wise.” Here, again, we have the oracular opening, and our expectations are raised. Are they fulfilled? Listen, and judge. “The ants are not a strong people, yet they prepare their food in the summer; The hyraxes, though a feeble folk, make their houses in the rock; The locusts have no king, yet they go forth in ordered bands; The lizard only layeth hold with her feet, and yet is in king’s palaces.” Thrift and providence, union and industry are here enforced, and enforced under images which Solomon has already made familiar to us. If these picturesque maxims do not go very deep, or solve any of the grand problems of life, yet they are welcome to us, and may be serviceable; but why introduce them with that oracular pomp about “there be four on earth which are little, but very wise.” Is not one tempted to answer back across the gulf, “True, O venerable Agur, but are not the *bees* also little and wise? Why not, then, make your four a five?”

We listen yet once again.† “Under three the earth trembleth, and under four can it not hold up: Under a servant when he rules; and a fool when he is full of meat; under an odious woman when she is married; and a handmaid when she is heir to her mistress.” With the best will in the world to find profound moral truths in these words, how can we find what is not there? Take the words simply and fairly, as you would take them were they in any other book, and what can you possibly learn from them beyond this?—that a man only fit to serve should not be allowed to rule; that a fool will prove the more vicious the better he is fed; that an odious woman is not a whit more attractive simply because she is married—married, let us hope, to the “fool full of meat” who immediately precedes her; and that a handmaid whose mistress has adopted her is very likely to give herself airs. Now is not that a fair and full statement of the contents of Agur’s oracular words? and do we need an “Oracle” to reveal such very obvious and simple truths as these?

Take another of these disappointing “words.”‡ Surely, when

* Verses 24—28.

† Verses 21—23.

‡ Verses 18, 19.

a wise man acknowledges himself baffled, we may expect to hear of wonders indeed. We shall see. "There be three which are too wonderful for me; yea, four which I know not: The way of an eagle through the air; the way of a serpent on a rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a maiden." Well, what are these mysteries after all? That neither an eagle nor a serpent, neither a ship nor the man in question, go straight to their object. The eagle flies in unexpected curves and circles; a serpent winds along a devious course; a ship sails first on this tack, then on that: so that you can never predict, from a partial survey, in what direction they will ultimately turn. And, in like manner, when a young man would gain the affections of a maiden and secure her for his own, instead of at once going straight to his object and asking for her hand, he fetches a compass; like an eagle, he flies in circles; like a serpent, he takes a devious course; like a ship, he goes first on this tack, then on that; and carries himself in general as if the longest way round were the shortest way there. Now I am far from saying that this is not an accurate description of one phase of human experience, or that it is not illustrated by quaint and happily chosen figures: but, after all, is it quite beyond the reach of human art? Could not an uninspired man have depicted it with equal accuracy and beauty? Is it such a subject, or such a handling of it, as imperatively to demand "the pencil of the Holy Ghost?"

Let us put our fortune to a final test, and for the last time bend an attentive ear across the centuries.* "There be three which are never satisfied; yea, four which say not 'Enough!' Hades; the barren womb; the earth not filled with water; and the fire" which is never tired of burning. And why should they say "Enough!" if they are not satisfied? What are we the wiser, what moral lesson have we learned from being told that it is impossible to satisfy them? Nay, since there is no lack of unsatisfied and dissatisfied things and persons, why not make the four fourteen? It is not difficult to utter trite oracles of this sort by the hour. "There be three which are never satisfied, yea, four which say not 'Enough!' The student who is always reaching forth after a completer knowledge; the hungry courtier who always craves a better place; the ambitious soldier for ever longing for fresh conquests; and the humble seeking heart which, always craving heavenly wisdom, refuses to feed on mere ingenuities of speech." Now is there not in this sentence—an ordinary sentence enough but for its oracular form—both a higher tone of thought and a graver moral tone than in Agur's

* Verses 15, 16.

corresponding oracle about the grave and the barren womb, the thirsty earth and the insatiable fire? Nay, more than half of the "Words of Agur" have now been cited: yet, have we heard a single sentence yet which none but God could have spoken? Are there not hundreds of men who could sit down at an hour's notice, and, with this chapter before them, write a parody on it which should breathe at once a broader wisdom and a loftier morality?

One thing is quite certain; it is, that far profounder sayings than any attributed to Agur may be selected, not only from the works of Christian poets and sages, but also from the words of ancient Rabbis for whom no claim of inspiration has ever been advanced. Thus, for instance,* Rabbi Simon said, "There be three things which keep the world in being; the law, the temple service, and acts of beneficence." Rabbi Eleazar Ben Arach said, "Warm thyself at the fire of the sages; but be careful that their coal doth not burn thee." Rabbi Myer used to say, "Look not at the flask, but at that which is therein; for there are new flasks full of old wine, and old flasks which have not even new wine in them." Rabbi Eleazar Ben Asaryah said, "To what may he be likened whose wisdom exceedeth his good deeds? To a tree whose branches are many and its roots few; so that the wind cometh and plucketh it up. But to what is he like whose good deeds exceed his wisdom? To a tree whose branches are few and its roots many; so that even the most violent tempest will not be able to remove it from its place." Rabbi Ben Zoma said, "Who is wise? He who is willing to learn from all men." Rabbi Ben Azai said, "The reward of a commandment is another commandment, and the reward of a sin another sin." Rabbi Antigonus used to say to his disciples, "Be not as men who serve their master for the sake of reward; but be like men who serve not looking for reward." Rabbi Gamaliel used to say, "Do God's will as if it were thy will, that He may accomplish thy will as if it were His." Rabbi Tarphon said, "The day is short, but the labour is great; and the labourers slothful, though the reward is large and the Master of the house presseth for dispatch." I might quote many more of these ancient pregnant sayings: but I have surely cited enough to show that Hebrew Rabbis to whom we deny the gift of inspiration have left behind them proverbs which the world would not willingly let die—proverbs which

* These curious Hebrew antiques, with many more equally striking and noble, may be found in "The Ethics of the Fathers," appended to "The Form of Daily Prayers," used by the German and Polish Jews. My copy is the London Edition of A.M., 5619.

equal, and excel, any we have heard from Agur's Rabbinical lips.

But why labour this point? why dwell on the limitations and defects of Agur's wisdom rather than on its excellences? why insist that his "words" are the words of man rather than the words of God? Is it that we may think less of the Bible, and learn less from it? Nay, but rather that we think at once more truly and more highly of the Bible; that we may learn how broad and wonderful a book it is, how large a field of thought and study it throws open for the exercise of our spiritual faculties. To read the Bible with full profit we must be "*men* in understanding," must have strong sharp teeth for the "*meat*" of the Word as well as weak soft lips for its "*milk*." It constitutes every man a judge as well as a scholar, a critic as well as a reader. It calls on us to exercise our spiritual energies both of discrimination and appropriation, as well as to receive its spiritual influences, and that we may receive them. It bids us distinguish between the good and the evil, which with impartial hand it records on the same page—between the higher and the lower wisdom which we may often find in the same book—to put Christ before Moses, and Isaiah before Jonah, and Solomon before Agur.

But it may be asked, "Is not this chapter inspired then?" Inspired! Of course it is inspired. By His Spirit, God has secured its accuracy and truth. It is exactly what it professes to be, neither less nor more. Does it profess to be a direct revelation of heavenly things, or to give the very words of God? No; it simply professes to be "the Words" of a certain Agur, a Hebrew Rabbi, who sets out by telling us that he was not very wise. He opens the chapter* with the frank confession, "I have neither learned wisdom, nor have I the knowledge of that which is holy." Are we to believe everything else he says, and to disbelieve this? Is it not the very way to turn the truth of God into a lie to insist on seeing in a chapter or a book more truths and other truths than it professes to contain? Are we bound, at the bidding of any man or Church, to reduce to a dead barren land the fair world of heavenly wisdom, with its infinite and beautiful diversities of scene; its lofty mountains which are bathed in perpetual light, and its narrow secluded valleys where the light is adusk with leafy shades; its broad rivers of clear water which reflect the bright overarching heaven, and the tiny soil-stained brooks which run through copse and covert to feed the rivers; its lofty trees which swing their giant branches freely in the free air, and the humble weeds and wild-flowers which blossom about their roots?

* Verse 3.

Are we, at the bidding of any theory or theology, to leave all this infinite variety of excellence for a dull flat land where all the waters run between straight banks, and all the trees grow to the same size and yield the same fruit? Not I, for one. I would rather wander, a solitary pilgrim, through the good land which God has given us, free to climb by laborious effort yonder lofty range of thought, or stroll through the fragrant dusky woods which clothe it; to sip of this brook on which the leaves float, or to bathe in that broad cleansing river; to walk with humble Agur in his narrow overshadowed grove and learn what he can teach, or to sweep, with Paul, across whole continents of truth, dazzled by the endless change and grandeur of the scene: I would rather wander thus, a freeman, through the whole domain of Truth, even at the risk of now and then meeting a lion in the woods or of straying from the path, than I would sit on any theological throne to impose fetters on those whom God has made free, and to wear fetters which even the imperial purple could only conceal.

But let us come down from these flights, and consider for a moment what are the real function and value of Agur's contribution to the Book of Proverbs. As I judge it, it has a very real and special value. Solomon, as we have seen, teaches us what the wiser Hebrews thought about the common facts of life in his reign. Agur tells us what the Hebrews of his time, who were not so wise, thought about the same facts. And I am bold to say that, than this of Agur's, there is no more characteristic chapter in the whole Bible, no chapter which is more strictly a revelation. It reveals a mode of thought which prevailed among the Jews for some centuries, from towards the close of the Old Testament canon till Christ came among us with the New Testament of His love. The Books of the Apocrypha which were written in this interval, and the sayings of uninspired Rabbis, some of which I have quoted, no less than many of the Proverbs and the Psalms, prove that the men who gave a tone to the national thought of that period took the same cautious and prudent view of human life and duty which we find in the "Words of Agur." So far as they could see, it was best for a man to gain an easy competence by industry and foresight, and not to aim at great wealth which, then, as often now in Eastern lands, brought many dangers and troubles with it; to give his mind a good deal to the study of wisdom, to read and meditate on the writings of the ancients, to classify and recast them so as to bring them well within the compass of the memory. This was their conception of the true aim of life, the chief end of man; not a very lofty or heroic conception, yet a conception that has its value. This was their conception; this also was Agur's.

Nay, the very form so characteristic of Agur, the oracular form with which he introduces his sayings—"There be three things, yea, four," and so on—is to be found in very many of the ethical and gnomic sayings of his time: thus, for instance, we hear of "the four different forms of human passions," of "four different modes of bestowing charity," of the "four sorts of students," and "the seven marks of a wise man." And here is a very curious and ancient Rabbinical saying, "There be four qualities in those who listen to the instructions of the wise: they are like a sponge, a funnel, a strainer, and a sieve; as a sponge that sucketh all up; as a funnel which receiveth at one end and dischargeth at the other; as a strainer which letteth the wine pass but retaineth the lees; and as a sieve which dischargeth the bran but retaineth the corn." One of the proverbs I have quoted from "The Book of Ethics" has a similar introduction: "There be three things which keep the world in being, &c." And it is a mode of expression which constantly recurs.

The true value of Agur's Proverbs lies in this, that he accurately reproduces for us the ethical modes of thought which obtained among the wiser part of the Hebrew people during a long and momentous period of their history. So that if, when we read in the later chapters of Kings and Chronicles, or in the later Prophets, of priests, and scribes, and sages, we wish to know what manner of men they were, how they looked out on this confusing, though not confused, universe, and what they thought of it, we have only to turn to Agur's "Words." From these we shall learn not only that they thought the lion the strongest of all beasts, and the greyhound very comely in going, and a brawling wife a terrible infliction; but also, that they pronounced discontent a chief evil; industry, foresight, providence, chief virtues; and, on the whole, were persuaded that it was good for a man to study to be quiet, and to keep that golden mean of comfort which is exempt from the strong temptations, whether of great opulence or extreme penury. Through the grace of Christ we may have learned a higher wisdom, may have a greater boldness; but none the less it will be well for us at times to revert to the more limited conceptions and modest estimates of the Rabbinical Jews. They may, at least, teach us sobriety in our conceptions and desires; a meek and quiet patience under the inevitable sorrows and disappointments of life, and that humble fear of God which is still both the beginning and the end of all true wisdom.

Nor must we omit to note that if, as I have said, we are often disappointed with Agur's words, the blame is not altogether his. For he gives us as much as he promises to give, as much as he

tells us he had. He does not lead us to expect anything more than "Words of Agur," words which he spake to his disciples, Ithiel and Ucal, and which they, holding them to be oracular—they, probably, and not he, wrote down. Agur has a very humble estimate of himself. He confesses * that he is "stupid" beyond the ordinary stupidity of men, insomuch that he sometimes doubts whether the bright intelligence and the large discourse of reason proper to man have not been denied him. With all his study, he has no clear insight into mysteries, no practised sagacity in handling dark problems; nor has he penetrated to the secrets of "holy wisdom," which lie hidden in the Law of God. With all his searching, he has not found out the Almighty to perfection; he doubts even whether he knows the true "name" of Him who "has gathered the wind in his fists," and fixed the earthen "boundaries," beyond which the heaving "waters" cannot pass. But he is very sure that "every word of God" is purged and tried; that it is the clear duty of a man and a Rabbi to seek, in the study of those pure words, an answer to all the questions which task his questioning intellect,—not to "add to His words," but to meditate them; and that to all who, conscious of their folly and weakness, "trust" in the Divine Wisdom, God will be "a shield," warding off difficulties and dangers which they are not prepared to meet. So modest an opening might well secure our regard. We may well suppose that he who knew himself so well was somewhat wiser than he knew. But we have no right to suppose that we know him better than he knew himself; no right to insist that, while he simply offers us counsels of earthly prudence, he is really giving us disclosures of supernal wisdom. We can do him no greater wrong than to look for the perfect inspirations of perfect wisdom in "Words" which he opens with the confession that the highest wisdom was so high that he could not attain it.

Still the question *will* recur, "Why, then, if we are to accept Agur's modest estimate of himself—why did God cause or permit his words to be included in the sacred canon? If they teach so little, why put them into our hands?" There are many answers to this question. First, the Bible was not written simply for *our* teaching, though we often treat it as if it were; and if Agur taught, as he did teach, certain lessons which men needed to learn during the centuries which preceded the Advent, his Proverbs have some claim to their place, even though they should have no teaching for such very important persons as we. Again: if, as we are often told, the proper study of mankind is man; if, as we are perpetually assured, any man's mental history

* Verses 2—6.

or position frankly stated is an invaluable treasure to all other men, then Agur's words have a teaching, and a teaching of very high value for us, since they frankly and accurately express his views of life; since they tell us how the large common facts of human experience shaped themselves to his thoughts. To their moral, we must add their historic value: as we have already seen, they reveal the mode of thought which characterized the leading Hebrew minds for many centuries; they help us to conceive the inner life of the good men whom we meet in the historical books, and should otherwise have known only from the outside. To their historic worth we must still add the consolatory value of the fact, that the words of a humble unknown student, who was not very wise, are precious in the sight of God, as well as the words of masters in Israel and kings who excelled in wisdom. Modest Agur,* who could speak no new word, nor preface any word with, "Thus saith the Lord," whose highest aim it was to study the words of more gifted men, and to reproduce them in artistic and portable forms,—this quaint modest Agur, should surely be dear to us; he stands nearer to our level than wise Solomon or eloquent Isaiah; and is it not a comfortable thought for us that God would not let even *his* words die?

II. Coming at last to THE PRAYER of Agur, we find it in exact accordance with all that we have inferred of him from his Proverbs. It is the prayer of a meditative man who reflects, and argues, and assigns reasons, even while he prays. It is the prayer of a man who, not having attained that highest wisdom which seeks to discover and adopt rather than to alter the will of God, has nevertheless that lower wisdom which prefers good to evil, and asks to be saved from temptations greater than it thinks itself able to bear.

His request,* translated into modern terms, is, that he may be kept far from the deceptive "vanities" of life, from setting his heart on the things which fade in our grasp, and which are "lies" as well as vanities, since, when we attain them, they mock and betray our hopes; and that, standing in the happy mean between "poverty and riches," he may have all earthly good in proportion to his modest needs.

The reasons he assigns for this request bring out the humble self-distrusting nature of the man. He fears that, if his store be large, he may grow proud and self-confident; that he may "believe" his most intimate convictions, and, instead of making God his trust, may ask "Who is Jehovah" that I should serve

* Verses 7—9.

Him? And, on the other hand, he fears that he cannot bear the sharp biting tooth of penury; that the pangs and cravings of want might drive him to "steal" from his neighbour's store and to lose his faith in the mercy of God. A sad dilemma, this, to which Agur would reduce us! That we, who for the most part stand a little uncertainly between prosperity and riches, should have on the one hand the prospect of renouncing God, and on the other the prospect of profaning His name.

Yet there is a truth, confirmed by experience, in Agur's sad logic. Extreme and long-continued prosperity does tend to induce self-confidence and forgetfulness of God. It is very hard for us, to whom wealth brings so many advantages and comforts, to believe that it cannot give us *all* we desire. It is very hard, when our fortune is obviously built on solid shining gold, to feel that after all only the kind providence of the kind God stands between us and absolute need. As our means, and appliances, and possessions grow, they too often absorb more and more of our slight faculty of thought, till we have little left for the services of God and the study of heavenly wisdom. When we set out in life, if we mean to do great things for ourselves, we commonly mean also to do great things for God and for our neighbour; but it too frequently happens that when we have fought our way through the dust and turmoil of the conflict, and have come out of it with the glittering prize in our hands, we find that, if we have done much for ourselves, we have done very little for our neighbour or for God.

Nor can it be denied that poverty disposes a man both to wrong his neighbour and to question the goodness, if not the justice, of the Divine Ruler and Lord. It is not very hard to be honest when you can buy all you want or desire; but to be honest when hunger pinches and the children are crying for bread—Is not that hard? It is easy to believe in a kind Providence when it comes in the form of a large balance at your banker's; but it is not so easy when all it yields you is rags, cold, starvation, shame. We think that cannot be a very unfair arrangement of things which brings us comfort and ease; but suppose it brought us discomfort, misery—how then? The unjust steward, with dire unaccustomed want staring him in the face till it put him out of countenance, could not dig and was ashamed to beg, but he could still steal and was not ashamed of that. And there are many who have taken his course to receive his reward; for we may be quite sure that the "creditors" for whom he had cheated his "lord" had no compunction in cheating him, and that when he came round to their doors they spurned him from the "habitations" into which he had hoped to be received. "Renounce God and die!" has been the temptation

whispered to the heart of many a man smitten into sudden need and pain; and every man is not a Job that he should reply to the tempter "Thou speakest as one of the impious."

There is a truth, then, in Agur's reasoning; but is it the whole truth? Surely not. The temptation of wealth is to forget God, and the temptation of poverty to break His law and profane His name; but there have been wealthy good men who, so far from belying their convictions in order to get rich and keep rich, have given more thought to God's service as they have added to their store, holding all as "stewards" of His gracious bounty: and there have been poor good men who, so far from perjuring themselves or pilfering from their neighbours, have borne the worst extremities of want with a sweet unfaltering patience, and a tranquil faith in the fatherly providence of God, which have been a wonder and a rebuke to all who have witnessed them. There is a *prudent goodness* in Agur's prayer—the goodness which would eschew the heavy labour of resisting strong temptations, and the grave responsibility of discharging difficult duties; but is there a *strong and noble goodness*? Surely not; for strength is shewn in enduring, not in avoiding, labour and responsibility; and nobility, not in creeping out of the way, but in valiantly encountering temptation. In short, Agur's Prayer, as we might have expected from the tone of his Proverbs, is the prayer of a cautious and somewhat timid man, who felt that any extreme, whether of prosperity or adversity, would be dangerous and might be fatal to him; and therefore, to avoid all risks and make himself secure, he asks for an easy comfortable competence in which he shall be free from the graver responsibilities and more searching temptations of life.

Jabez, the Scribe whom sorrow had chastened, the Border Chieftain, whose nearest heroic duty was to wage unflinching war against the Philistines and advance the borders of Jehovah's kingdom—Jabez called on the God of Israel,* and said, "Oh that Thou wouldst bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that Thine hand might be with me, and that Thou wouldest keep me from evil that it may not grieve me." One might have thought that Jabez had quite enough to do in defending his hill-fortress and maintaining his inheritance against the incursions of the enemy. But, while Agur prays for ease and comfort, Jabez prays for strength to do a difficult duty; while Agur prays for exemption from grave and perilous responsibilities, Jabez asks that they may be imposed upon him; while Agur prays that he may be kept from temptation, Jabez asks that he may be

* 1 Chronicles iv. 9, 10.

kept from "evil." And Jabez, surely, is more "honourable" than Agur; for it is more honourable to seek victory over temptation than exemption from it, to desire strength for arduous duties than to crave the comforts of an undisturbed competence.

But though it be a better prayer than Agur's, is even that of Jabez a perfect prayer? Let a third prayer reply. In the school, his disciples hushed into reverent silence, we have heard Rabbi Agur pray, "Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food proportioned to my need, lest I be full, and belie myself, and say, 'Who is Jehovah?' or lest I should be poor, and steal, and profane the name of my God." In the hill-fortress, his Arab kinsmen adding their "Amen," we have heard Jabez, the Border Chieftain, pray, "O that Thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my borders, and keep me from evil that it may not grieve me." And now we stand in a garden at the foot of a mountain, a garden thickly studded with grey olive-trees. It is night, and the heavy darkness takes the form of a Cross for One the latchet of whose sandal neither Jabez nor Agur were worthy to unloose, but who now lies groaning and bleeding on the ground. He, too, presents His prayer to God, "O my Father, Thy will, not mine, be done!"

And here, at last, we reach the true wisdom, the highest wisdom—the wisdom which acknowledges God to be wiser than itself, and asks, not that it may have its own way, and see things go according to its own conception of what is happiest and best, but that it may have grace to adopt the will of God, and act out the design of His large perfect love. This, *this* is the perfect prayer. It is not ours to ask that we may enjoy the comforts of an assured competence, which, though it looks so harmless, so desirable even, may be a more fatal temptation than either wealth or penury. Nor is it ours to ask for enlarged borders, for grave responsibilities and heroic duties which, if they came, might prove a burden we could very hardly bear. But it is ours to seek to discover God's wise and perfect will concerning us, and, having discovered, frankly to adopt it. Instead of praying, "Give me neither poverty nor riches," or "Enlarge my borders," our prayer should be, "Give me either poverty or riches; enlarge or contract my borders as seemeth best to Thee: Thy will, not mine, be done." And when we have learned this highest lore, we shall find, as one of those ancient Rabbis taught, that if we "do God's will as if it were ours, He will accomplish our will as if it were His will;" for it will be His.

LENNARD.

TENNYSON'S "TWO VOICES."

HAPPILY, not many know what it is to dismally debate within their souls such dark mysteries and dire issues as this poem embodies. The misery, the oppression of doubts that cannot be solved, of fears that cannot be laid, of questions that cannot be answered, which those are conscious of who are given to listening to strange whisperings within the depths of their own spirits, and to peering into an unknown universe whose dimness is pierced only by faint lights on its nearer confines; the baffling perplexity of reasoning on the phenomena of the present life and of speculating in vague theories on the future; the awful temptation to end the terrible agony, the wild bewilderment, in death; the intensely earnest argument, through a weary night, whether thus 'to sleep' may not be 'perchance to dream' more fearfully, pleaded against a voice within that promises now a fuller life to hope and now an unbroken rest to despair, till the tempter flees with his mockings and his sophistry before a spiritual light that comes with the world's day, whose beams, like dawn on Memnon, might wake after such a darkness a burst of as jubilant music as "The night is departing," in Mendelssohn's Song of Praise;—such are not ordinary experiences of men. Yet hopes of life, and fears of death, speculations concerning their mysteries, struggles through darkness into light, and alas! in not a few cases, the temptation itself, though not often having the same origin, have been generally enough felt in the half-thoughts of hours of reverie and the gloom of times of sorrow to elicit perhaps some interest in an examination of a poem in which rare genius has found language for these phases of the soul.

"The Two Voices" was first published in 1842, since which time it has been often republished with Mr. Tennyson's collected poems. Although very different in its theme, it reminds the reader of "In Memoriam," not only in its exquisite diction, perfect imagery, and psychological power of analyzing the most subtle thoughts and feelings, but also in the same conflict with doubt, and final triumph in "the hidden hope."

The phenomenon of the soul reasoning with itself, opposing thought to thought, hope to fear, faith to doubt, thus hearing as it were an inward conflict of dissonant voices, is what takes place in every process of thought which involves the choice of an alternative.

The poem presents one who through the darkness of a night

that ends in the break of a "sabbath-morn" is torn by two contending moods of his spirit—two voices—one, evil, dark, despairing, proposing death as a refuge from the misery of human ignorance; the other that at last overcomes, fearing death, clinging to life, hoping for an unknown good, believing against "the simple senses" in a higher spiritual life that "the heart divines."

Most human in its ignorance, and weakness, and sense of suffering, is the cry with which the poem and the temptation open :—

"A still small voice spake unto me,
'Thou art so full of misery,
Were it not better not to be?'"

The vague suspicion, latent in so much of our common talk, that "being" ends with the flesh—the specious falsehood of materialism—is quietly assumed as true, and urged, together with the misery with which all hearts are bursting, and for which all Churches and philosophies have had their medicaments, and the shrinking from this misery and longing for the rest of forgetfulness which are equally human, as reasons for ending all in death. But, in answer, the soul, recognizing, amid its misery that it is "fearfully and wonderfully made," recoils from casting itself into "endless shade." And now taking, for a moment, an entirely different line of argument from annihilation, the tempting voice insinuates, simply by a reference to the dragon-fly, that had burst that day "a living flash of light" from his "old husk," that, after all, death may be but the entrance upon a nobler sphere of life. Thus strangely do we forge good and evil into instruments to work out the ends we purpose, and with an inconsistency, too, which only the strength of our desires prevents us from seeing. But to this it is replied that man has already "the lordliest proportion," for he has "dominion in the head and breast." This reverence for human nature—a truer humility than the loud vauntings of Pharisaism—gives a real resistance to the temptation to do violence to "the temple of the body," and prepares the soul for the reception finally of a sure hope of immortality, which it is now too bowed by a sense of its present wondrous being to snatch wildly as a dragon-fly fancy, or to follow like an *ignis fatuus*, with a reckless rush into the gloom of death. Foiled thus, there is a tone of irritation in the answer, "Self-blinded are you by your pride." We chafe against the stern logic that resists desire. It is urged—

"That in a boundless universe
Is boundless better, boundless worse."

And that man can find within it a "statelier than his peers," while the assertion of man's essential greatness is further answered by the insignificance of an individual amid the many of a race. But against these heartless statistics that would absorb its interests in generalizations, the soul with a strong cry asserts its distinctive personality:—

"No compound of this earthly ball
Is like another, all in all."

"Scoffingly" comes the reply. The specific difference of one of their fellows will not be mourned by men when it is lost, nor will "one beam be less intense." Both the relative and the essential insignificance of the individual are insinuated in this answer. The estimate of other men is indicated. Thus often do we reconcile ourselves to the foregoing of life's nobler purposes by the thought that the world will pay little heed to our work. And the essential worth of man is denied in terms which may be understood as meaning that outward nature will remain the same, or that the elements of life in which man mingles will not be affected (at least sensibly) by the removal of one factor. To the imperious dogmatism of the tempting voice which has been now confidently asserting annihilation, now the grander development of the disembodied spirit, and now the relations of the generic laws of life, the soul would reply, "Thou canst not know," making a defence out of the very darkness that has crushed it, but tears well up for words. Again does the evil mood seize the moment of bitterness and return to its first suggestion:—

"Thou art so steeped in misery
Surely 'twere better not to be."

And there is added the taunt that sorrow has bewildered reason, and so the counter-arguments of the soul are but wild words. But the burdened heart has been relieved by "its overflow." Hope, though it be only in a human source, springs up. The coming years may bring relief. But the "hollow voice" preaches only despair. It is answered by a more distinct assertion of the permanence of nature and the permanence of thought. The response, in lines of great beauty, affirms that this progress will continue come when death may, therefore, Why care for that the long results of which the most lingering life will not see? There is the same fallacy here as before. The definite and the near are ignored for the vague and the far-off—a sophism which leads the present duties of life to be too often lost sight of in the brilliant but visionary theories of "a philosophy falsely so called." That the further advance of men is a reason for fore-

going the advantages of present developments which "each month is various to present" is denied in that very assertion. Through the splintered mullions of "a ruined tower" the watcher will see some movements of the passing life of men ere the clinging ivy looses its hold and the hoary stones crumble away. The reply to this is but a slight variation of the previous argument that progress will still continue after "the little life" of any individual is over. But, further, in answer to the assertion that at least something more will be known if death is not anticipated and life lived out, it is argued that after the longest life, the amplest mind will at the last be itself *conscious* of the greatness of the unknown—

" 'The highest mounted mind,' he said,
 'Still sees the sacred morning spread
 The silent summit overhead.' "

The figure here is suggested by the "tower," and the idea is that there will be mountain heights rearing themselves far above, upon which the slant beams of a morning will strike, the full sheen of whose *day* will never be seen. In the next verse, the illustration, conveying the same thought, is changed from height to a distant horizon, and it is asked :—

" Will thirty seasons render plain
 Those lonely lights that still remain
 Just breaking over land and main ? "

While reverting to the image of mountains with the morning light upon their brow, the impossibility of rendering the wisdom of the undiscovered future a possession of living men is implied in the next exquisite lines :—

" Or make that morn, from his cold crown
 And crystal silence creeping down,
 Flood with full daylight glebe and town ? "

The temptation before presented in the reference to the dragon-fly is now put plainly, "By death enter into that fulness of knowledge which only the soul, freed from sense, can know." The relative insignificance of any present gain of wisdom is insisted on—"The scale is infinite." Then comes an appeal to human feeling in words aimed at the very heart. The misery of a felt weakness, of "seeming to find" only to wake to a consciousness of delusion, had better be exchanged for death, it is urged. The sickness of the mind, too, that will not even allow of "seeming to find" is reiterated.

To an equally human strain of reply this gives the key. The body will be despised as that of a coward, if self-violence is com-

mitted. But the subtle answer is made that it is "more vile" to live in the body, yet loathing it, "than once from dread of pain to die." The presenting of the "dread of pain" as the reason for seeking death is another insidious appeal to the soul's present harrowing misery—the most vulnerable part. The distempered confusion of the soul that, shrinking from ill, shrinks also from men's judgments, thereby being "a coward still," is hurled as a reproach. Then again the indifference of men to their suffering fellows is urged as a reason why their opinions should be despised, especially when, as is implied, they will never reach him "lying underground." And a like speedy oblivion will be the lot of good and bad. Finally the "vexed spirit" is bid in the faith of blind ignorance to seek the deep sleep of the grave that no sound will break. But the spirit cannot find resolution from either scorn, or the prospect of that "waste wide" which faith does not people. Rather is there a longing after the flush of youthful hopes. And here we have the first indication of the soul's ultimate victory. The recurring to the early dream of something nobler, better, freer, to be attained in the future, though created only by the fervid imagination of vigorous youth—human, not divine—is an advance from lower human feeling, and an escape, for the time, from dark despair, while it is also a preparation for the reception of the belief that holy men have indeed found a true realization of those by-gone visions. Hope is a receptive state for faith. It will be observed that these anticipations are in keeping with the previously expressed reverence for human nature and faith in human progress. We must pass over this dream of youth although every line is suggestive.

To this rehearsal of youthful yearnings the mocking voice replies that they were but "the stirring of the blood"—nature's stimulants to give a little energy for our earthly life—but with after failures and falls these hopes decay, and there remains only the "remedy" of death. And even had there been "thro' enduring pain" this life-long seeking after the true and great, "the riddle of the earth" would not have been solved from birth to death, and all the toil would have been "little-worth." The slow progress of men in knowledge—material knowledge is here to be understood—is again urged, and it is affirmed—

"Much less this dreamer, deaf and blind,
Named man, may hope some truth to find,
That bears relation to the mind."

The next verse would seem to compare man "deaf and blind" to the worm that draws his separate thread, and spins "his own cocoon." It would thus imply that man, shut up to his own little tasks and narrow range of thought, cannot comprehend

the manifold aspects and wide relations of truth. A strain of irony and sarcasm now succeeds. The poor, baffled, distracted, weary soul is told to "Cry, faint not." But the hopelessness of its endeavours is presented in the scornful words—

"Either Truth is born
Beyond the polar gleam forlorn,
Or in the gateways of the morn."

The far-offness and vast uncertainty of the place in which truth is to be found, which oppressed Pilate, are here expressed. Again, a mocking exhortation is uttered, "Climb;" but it is added that Hope has not strength of wing enough to reach the summit, while the dark clouds swathe the mountains from their very base. And if, at times, "a little corner shines"—the voice of despair continues—and confidence springs up in the heart, the blinding fog will soon again hide the way. Shadows will be "struck," clouds will be "embraced." And so, man, with his higher aspirations, remains "owning but a little more than beasts." From satire there is now a transition to the old drear tone—

"Cease to wail and brawl,
Why inch by inch to darkness crawl?
There is one remedy for all."

The crawling to darkness may either refer to human attainments in knowledge—the climbing of the fog-hidden mountain, or it may signify the slow natural progress to death, which may be reached at once by those who will. In the latter case the tempting voice would seem, as, indeed, it has before, when bidding the soul to "sleep in trust," to have ceased to affirm either the annihilation, or the fuller development of the spirit, and to content itself now with presenting the blankness of the unknown.

Passionately does the soul recoil from the view which would make death a refuge from delusions on every hand. It is "dull, one-sided." The confusions and contradictions of human opinions are, indeed, admitted; but the belief is clung to that some, like Stephen, have struggled into the Divine peace, have seen the Heavenly light, and heard—

"Ev'n in the charnels of the dead,
The murmur of the fountain-head——."

This, it will be observed, is an advance to a higher stage. The dreamings of youth now give place to the hopes furnished by the lives of holy men,—surely their sublime faith reposed not on falsehoods. The answer, however, is made that the grounds

of their trust were not certain, but that the "elements were kindlier mixed." The desire to eliminate the supernatural by referring to circumstances and temperament what is due to the Divine grace, is often manifested. The soul rejoins, that while conscious of its present burden, it fears lest going hence weak, naked, cheerless; it may pass by death into a worse condition, become surrounded by greater perplexities, and have its misery rendered permanent. The materialistic answer is drawn from the utter repose and indifference to all which is to be seen in the face of the dead—

"High up the vapours fold and swim:
About him broods the twilight dim:
The place he knew forgetteth him."

In the universal darkness which doubt affirms, the voice of trust would find a *tu quoque* reply—

"Nor canst *thou* show the dead are dead."

The physical signs of death are acknowledged; but "a deeper tale my heart divines." In the next four stanzas, the darkness, the sadness, the stillness, the night, with which our first impressions invest death, are presented in images of great beauty and power, and it is asked—

"Why, if man rot in dreamless ease,
Should that plain fact, as taught by these,
Not make him sure that he shall cease?"

But from this outward aspect the soul reverts to the "inward evidence" which "doubts against the sense,"—Whence does that come? Man, it is declared, discerns himself "not simple as a thing that dies," but as possessed of a wisdom, whose vision only the conditions of the present state hinder. Instinctively, he prepares for a higher life, the dimly seen mystery of which he names "Eternity." The ideal within him Nature does not realize: it only furnishes the soil in which his thoughts germinate. The whisper of "a Heavenly Friend" is faintly heard by him, and the final cause of all is, though feebly, apprehended. The origin and the end, the liberty and the restraint of life, are, however, full of perplexity. Moral evil he is conscious of. The confusion of a near Divine Glory and yet of a separation from that Glory is seen—

"Ah! sure within him and without,
Could his dark wisdom find it out,
There must be answer to his doubt."

Thus doubt is enveloped in its own darkness. The mystery

must remain, since doubt does not supply courage enough to solve it—

"In the same circle we revolve,
Assurance only breeds resolve."

Baffled for awhile, the unbelieving, evil voice soon, however, again assails the perturbed spirit. This time with subtle suggestions respecting life and immortality, which, from the mystery surrounding the fact of existence, would fain induce hopeless uncertainty, and render the most cherished human beliefs delusive unrealities. The question is asked—

"Where wert thou when thy father play'd
In his free field, and pastime made,
A merry boy in sun and shade."

When he was yet commencing

"A life of nothings, nothing worth,
From that first nothing ere his birth
To that last nothing under earth!"

The voice which represents the nobler part of man, struggling after faith, responds by urging that only "a vague suspicion" has, at the most, been presented. But admitting that the doctrine "to begin implies to end" might possibly be maintained, there is no certain proof of the fact that human life commences at birth. The reply, though professedly "a random arrow," is conceived in as subtle a spirit as the objection. The want of recollection of any prior state is no sufficient proof that such has not existed. The same life may be continued through various organisms and conditions, while "the slipping thro' from state to state" may be utterly forgotten, just as the experiences of a trance are lost by him who awakes from one until he passes into another. If our present state exactly corresponded to some previous condition, the memory of the latter might become vivid. If there has been a fall from a higher order, "some legend of a fallen race" might alone survive,—some indefinite yearning for the great and glorious. If we have risen from a lower condition, though the past may exist in its results, it may have left no distinct recollections. Infancy is forgotten. The darkness of insanity is not remembered by those who have recovered from it. But if first the soul was "a naked essence," it would be still more devoid of memory. For memory dealing with time, and time with matter, how can recollection reach beyond the commencement of a material incorporation? "Glimpses of forgotten dreams," too, at times flash upon the soul. This seeming to see the reflections or to hear the echoes of scenes and acts that we

cannot determine the place of in the past, is not in fact, we believe, a very uncommon experience.

A scornful laugh comes in answer. "Dreams," catching at the last idea, are not discussed.

"Suffice it thee
Thy pain is a reality."

The tempter is again reduced to urging simply the bitterness of suffering as a reason for seeking death. But a more confident tone is now assumed in reply. By seeking to render all things doubtful, the possibility of greater evil being consequent upon death becomes also greater; and, however despairing man may be, it is life, "more life and fuller," that he craves. Forlorn now, the tempted and tried man sits till the evil spirit of his heart, foiled in all its insidious approaches, can only, "in quiet scorn," exclaim, as the dawning light ends the weary night of spiritual agony: "Behold, it is the Sabbath morn."

The casement is opened to the light and freshness. The pealing Church bells ring out the call to Christian worship.

"On to God's house the people prest :
Passing the place where each must rest
Each enter'd like a welcome guest."

The sight of a father and a mother, with their little daughter, walking in gravity, gentleness, and purity, to Church, gladdens and warms by natural sympathies the heart of him who has held such a long debate with doubt. "Be of better cheer," is the whisper that now comes "silver-clear" from the depths of his spirit. A dim perception seems to come "from some blissful neighbourhood," of "the end" and "the good" to be sought by man. But the voice of growing faith has no clear, full revelation to make. It can only breathe an imperfect whisper "to solace woe."

"I may not speak of what I know."

Yet its music "overtakes far thought." It is responded to by the deepest convictions of the heart.

"A hidden hope" is all that the voice can answer to the questioning spirit, demanding how much it knows. This "hidden hope" is bound by the silver cord of life itself to the consciousness of every man, though it may take no shape nor even reveal its existence until awakened by the light of some higher truth, or stirred into action by the fierceness of spiritual conflicts. Immortality, Heaven, God, are ancient beliefs of our race, need-

ing not tradition or revelation to preserve them, for they are part of our very nature.

The inner gladness and trust help the soul now

“ To feel, altho’ no tongue can prove
That every cloud, that spreads above
And veileth love, itself is love.”

“Forth in the fields” walks the long tempted and sore perplexed man. “The pulse of hope” is communicated to him by the quickening influences of the life-teeming earth. He sees the spring beauty issuing from the winter’s dreariness, and as he hears the wild chorus of the birds can scarcely discern “room for sense of wrong.” The gladness, beauty, and life of Nature, are often the healthiest tonics for a morbid, doubting, sorrowing spirit. Amidst the universal variety it becomes a source of wonder why “one gloomy thought” should have been allowed so to possess the soul; and why “barren” despair should have been preferred to the voice that said “Rejoice! rejoice!”

DISCOURSES BY THE LATE PROFESSOR SCOTT.*

THE writer of this paper spent a few hours, in the autumn of 1850, in the society of Mr. Scott, who was at the time a Professor of the English Language and Literature in University College, London. We had never seen him before, have never seen him since; but shall never cease to feel the influence of that short interview. A friend of his of thirty years standing expressed in this sentence what our experience knows to be true: “A single hour’s conversation with him made one feel the originality of mind and candour with which he approached every subject, and the spirit of pure kindness which penetrated all his views of men and parties.” We were then young and earnest, and desired more than we did for life itself the presence of some one who, while dealing sincerely with the facts of science and the un-

* Discourses. By Alexander J. Scott, M.A., Professor of Logic in Owen’s College, Manchester. London: Macmillan & Co. 1866.

doubted results of criticism, had the power of strengthening the foundations of our faith, and of leading us up, which we knew to be possible, to a truer rest in Jesus Christ. Such a one we recognized Mr. Scott to be, who, in a few minutes, gained our heart's confidence, and from whom we kept no secret thought. A very different treatment had we received a few weeks before from one of the guardians of orthodoxy who, on being asked a modest question about a book of Bushnell's which was then exciting some stir, gave us the *ex cathedra* look, and for a reply we had a rather large supply of harsh words. We left Mr. Scott in the full conviction that we had been face to face with one called and anointed by the Spirit to be a teacher, and can somewhat understand the reverent regard felt towards him by Mr. Baldwin Brown and others. He bore with him the credentials of his high calling, as one in whom the spirit of truth dwelt, and who in the power of that spirit could give to a casual stranger something like "a physical manifestation of the truth." He had the secret of teaching, if we may credit the severest judges of his day, had a mind which instinctively received the loftiest impression of every subject, would undergo any toil to verify the minutest detail, was free, but not without much suffering, and paying for his freedom a heavy price, from the prejudices and the necessary limitations of a party. He saw the truth in its own native state as existing in the divine mind, and at this fair sight his whole being was stirred and his face glowed with a glow which all who saw and heard him shared; but this vision he could not in its fulness identify with any institution which the senses or the intellect of man could present, though believing that all on earth should partake of it. A vision as fair once presented itself to John Henry Newman, which he could retain only on the condition of its being embodied in some visible shape, and confined by an act of the will to the Church of Rome. When he succeeded in dethroning the moral and spiritual, in repressing every action of them which did not square with his rigid ecclesiasticism and severe logic, the vision to Newman became dimmer, and the night darker; and for this same reason the strongest feeling with him ever must be of being in the dark. To Mr. Scott, and we may add Dr. Arnold, the spirit of truth was more sacred than any system of it; they followed the same wherever it led them, making it not a condition of following to know beforehand they should not be led beyond the well-known bounds; and to their loyal obedience in this respect do we ascribe their clearer vision, and their words possessing the force and insight of nearly a new speech to some of us. He was not indifferent to truth as apprehended by the intellect; regarded the truthful spirit as essential to

this, and sure to result in its increase. "Indifferent!" so far from that, he regarded him as the greatest benefactor of his race who tried to give a more exact expression of the truth, and believed this could not be honestly done by any without adding to our stores. These *Discourses* bear on every page traces of the same spirit. How in them he gives a generous and true view of systems which at the best are one-sided, and which, unless supplemented and corrected, are false; how firmly he treads in dark places, how he discovers the gold amid the rubbish, and how glad he is to confess the truth of God in the very presence of the enemy,

Latterly he belonged to no party, to no existing church, and yet men of the most opposite schools in theology, philosophy, and literature were equally drawn towards him. He was in his earlier years a minister of the Kirk of Scotland, and left it from no act of his own, but with deep sorrow, and through a harsh judgment of the Presbytery, which we would hope some of them would reverse to-day. He was charged, while an assistant-Minister with Mr. Irving, with affirming the peccability of the Saviour—a statement which to him and to others beside him seemed essential to give reality to the temptation and even to the life of our Saviour. No one held more firmly than he did the sinlessness of the Lord, and regarded that as fundamental to his character as a Redeemer. When charged he did not tone down the difference, but like an honest man affirmed all the more loudly because of the charge. Some may say what a Scotch act and possible there, only thirty years ago, but not to-day. Would it were so! There are Nonconformist Churches which are kept back from repeating this offence to the Master and injustice to his church, not from want of will, but happily from powerlessness. He kept himself free after this experience, not from choice but from necessity, gave up much that he might confess in speech and in act the unity of the body of Christ. Schism from the false became to him no heresy, but a necessary condition of union with the true. With what force and truth, and wholly free from the corrupt taint of sectarianism, has he discussed this in his discourse on *Schism*. We must know from whom and from what we separate, before we decide the character of the schism; for separation from the corrupt is union with life, and union with corruption is union with death. We have no volume in our library we prize more than this discourse, for it has helped and will still help us to be true to our Lord: we know nothing in the literature of schism comparable with it, but among all with whom the love of party is above the love of truth it will never find favour. Some hard words are sometimes in the exigency of party spirit applied to him and men of his spirit, but one of the hardest of

them could not be used in his case save in sheer ignorance. "Rationalist" indeed! why every one of these discourses contains an earnest protest against the intellect claiming supremacy over faith and the working of the spirit of life in every honest heart. Some men are below the virtue required in party spirit; they can grasp nothing firmly, can be true to no power but themselves. But others are above it; cannot be true to a party without being false to their Lord and to themselves. Call them "broad," sneer at them as such, they feel themselves to be very narrow, and mourn over it, compared with the breadth of Christ's truth and the catholicity of his love. Their belief is that the truth of Christ is wider than any sect, and all the sects combined; that the truth of Scripture is not yet worthily expressed in the purest creed, and never can be; though the most faulty contains much of it; that Holy Scripture is an exhaustless mine whole veins of which are yet unworked.

It was this spirit of truth which made it necessary for him to follow it, and also the very keen sympathy he had with truth in all forms and departments which drew towards him men varying in most things save in their common pursuit of the true. In him the scientific faculty, which led him as far as he could to form a harmonious whole, in which each part had its rightful place, to travail "in quest of the central force of the physical world" was strong, and no less strong was the imaginative faculty which could anticipate distant results. None can read these discourses on Romanism (comprehending in that term what he called Laudism, and which we to-day call Ritualism), on Chartism, and on Socialism, without finding the working of these faculties in the vigorous grasp he has of their systems, and in his power to predict the future in the seeds of the present. The antagonism that often exists in many minds between the physical and the moral world, and the undue preference of the one to the other which exists in the best minds, you find not in him. Preference he had, and a just one; he felt he was treading firmer ground in the moral world, and he reminds us here as being of kindred spirit with the author of the "Plurality of Worlds." "Far be it from us," he says, while contrasting the laws of the natural world with those of the spiritual world, "to deny the greater duration, the further reach, and the greater stability founded on that further reach, of those laws manifested in Revelation, and of those decrees which stand in force in the spiritual world." For the volume of creation he thanked God, read its pages reverently, for they too were inspired; and as to the Bible, none of us turn to it with more childlike spirit than he did, while the steady and true light it gave on the highest subjects of all raised it above the fluctuations of human opinions

and theories. The Bible was to him the most divine book, and also the most human. In it—in the kingdom of God revealed in it, he knew the solution existed for this world's perplexities and sorrows, and to it the weary world must come.

As a proof of the high regard felt for him by differing minds, let these extracts suffice, which are taken from letters addressed either to the Council of University College, London, or to the Trustees of Owen's College, Manchester, when he was a candidate for a Professorship in their respective colleges. Thomas Carlyle writes of him thus :—"Mr. Scott has long been known to me as a man of great, solid, and original powers of mind ; of eager, persevering industry ; of a pure, high, and earnest character ; whose pilgrimage through the confusions, intellectual and other, of our time, has been that of a valiant resolute man, who has made many fine acquirements, both as a scholar and as a man." The late Archdeacon Hare, and "*venerable*" will he ever be to us, referring to these very *Discourses*, says :—"The reasoning and style have an Aristotelian conciseness and condensation : small as is the bulk of his writings, they prove him to be one of the greatest thinkers and writers of our age. As a lecturer, he excels any I have ever heard, combining, in an unparalleled manner, depth and precision. His style is an index of his mind. There are scarcely three men in England who have meditated so deeply on the great moral and social problems of the age ; and, assuredly, there is none who would possess the same power of uttering his thoughts in clear, strong, convincing words." The late Sir W. Hamilton remarks :—"It is now many years since I once and again was an auditor during a series of Lectures which Mr. Scott delivered in Edinburgh on the Relations of Religion and Philosophy. I was then strongly impressed by the clearness and force with which he expounded, in extemporaneous language, doctrines by no means of the easiest apprehension, and still more by the depth and originality of the doctrines themselves. The impression from those lectures, made me afterwards look with interest into some of his publications, and those which were religious discourses comprised all I had been induced to expect." Professor Maurice—and all honour to Cambridge for its recent act—writes of him :—"I have never met with any one who combined so much of the method and accuracy which can only be acquired from scientific studies, with a thorough knowledge of literature, the most generous appreciation of all that is best in it, and great critical power." Writing on a later occasion, when he expresses the hope of his Professorship at Owen's College giving him the opportunity of lecturing on moral science as well as on the English language and literature, Professor Maurice adds, "I did not feel that there would have been

any thing strange in such a union of offices, because I have observed that you never present your hearers with mere digests of opinions or systems, but are most careful to bring living men before us, and to connect their views with themselves and with the times to which they belong. I have felt this peculiarity of yours most strongly myself, and I know that, in some attempts which I have made to lecture and to write treatises on these subjects, I have derived more assistance from hints which you have dropped than from any of the compendiums which are so numerous in our times." We should like to know what relation, if any, this *Discourse* on the Kingdom of God, and still more what influence the frequent intercourse of these two men may have had in rendering the Kingdom of God the one central thought of Mr. Maurice's labours and writings, the burden of the Lord to him, and which he has not declared in vain. We have before us letters from Bunsen and others, but must refrain. We have given these extracts chiefly for the sake of revealing the many-sided sympathies of Mr. Scott, and because we see in him a possibility, more, a prophecy, of a day when minds seemingly as wide apart as the poles may find a common centre. We have heard on good authority that, during his professorship at University College, his house afforded a frequent reunion for Hare, Maurice, Bunsen, and others, where they exchanged thoughts on all subjects, specially such as related to religion, and the social and ecclesiastical systems of the day. We have done this also in the hope that these well-known names may secure the attention of some of our readers to this volume, to whom the name of Mr. Scott may be unknown. To a limited circle in London, Edinburgh, Manchester, he was known as an unrivalled lecturer on subjects worthy of his generous ardour; those who shared the privilege of his friendship and conversation were bound to him by the strongest ties of love and obligation, for to him they owed their very selves; while to others of us who knew him not thus, no suspicion of his being over-estimated by his more intimate friends will be entertained after any acquaintance on our part with this volume.

The title given to the volume is advisedly chosen. They are not orations, lectures, and least of all, sermons in the modern sense of that term; they are discourses, the spoken utterances of an earnest mind, which must speak, and had the gift of utterance. We understand these discourses were all spoken, unwritten, and taken down at the time by a reporter. That he was known to a few comparatively is due in part to his separation from all parties in Church and State, and more so still, to his nearly entire abstinence from writing. The reason of this, we can only

conjecture. It may have been a physical cause which rendered writing impossible, or it may have been a mental peculiarity which required communion with other minds as the condition of calling forth its own power; perhaps he felt the process of disintegration was yet to proceed much further before any wise attempt at building was possible; or it may have been something wholly different; but such is the fact and over it we mourn. We are sure the mechanical drudgery of writing was not the cause, for the pleading of toil would have no weight with this man of large culture and of constant labour. The order observed in the book is the chronological, the date when they were spoken; but of that portion which treats of the social systems of the day as compared with Christianity, the natural order prevails for they are closely connected, and form by themselves a unity.

The subjects of these discourses are the Divine Will, Acquaintance with God, Revelation, the Kingdom of Christ, Romanism, Chartism, Socialism, Schism, and the First Principle of Church Government. These are subjects of enduring interest, have been the questions of the past, and will be those abreast of all the future. Our social systems continue not the same, have changed much since these discourses were spoken, which contain accordingly some few things better fitted for 1841 than for 1866, but only few, for our author deals only sparingly in things which can change; but the Kingdom of God abideth, that kingdom which is the life and true touchstone of all human systems. Anything like an analysis of these discourses we despair of giving, and should condemn ourselves for the attempt, for every sentence is overladen with meaning. That we take not to be the highest function of a reviewer; but this, rather, to enter into the spirit of his author, and to hold up, as the spies did, in the sight of our readers the rich clusters which grow here, in the hope that they too may say, "the land is good, let us go up and possess it."

In the first discourse, on the *Divine Will*, a real difference, and one of much practical moment, is drawn between the decrees of God and His will. His decrees embrace His originating resolves; His fixed purposes; have their place in a region outside the moral and spiritual, both in God and man, and are irresistible. The will of God, or what He wills, desires, is another name for His character, mind, disposition, and relates chiefly to the moral and spiritual. "His decrees are but of determinate facts; the interpretation, the spiritual meaning of these facts is a higher knowledge—the knowledge of the will of God." The knowledge of His decrees would be the knowledge of His purpose, while the knowledge of His will would be the knowledge of Himself;—the former, that of His hand; the latter, that of His heart. This

distinction is founded on and justified fully by the two-fold usage of this term "Will of God" in Scripture, which in a few examples agrees with the meaning now given to His decrees, but generally agrees with that given to His will. It is the knowledge of His will as thus understood, and not of His decrees, that brings us near to God and produces confidence in our spirits. To know what a man does, proposes, is one thing, and may be enough, ordinarily, to guide our conduct towards him, only it falls far short of confidence; but to know what he is begets trust. "We all know that there is in man something wider and deeper than his purposes, something from which they spring: that is the heart, the moral character of the man." The old and ever new question is put in this discourse, If God be the Creator, the life of all that is, how can anything exist which is not according to His will? In the generous reply given, they are remembered who have meditated so deeply on this problem as to see no other personality than God's. Care is taken to show how in a true sense all which exists is according to God's will. "While the murderer conceives malignity in his heart, He in whom he is living, moving, and having his being is at that instant sustaining his capacities of affection so turned to evil." With equal care it is shown that in the sense intended by the questioner things do exist antagonistic and painful to the Divine will. This comes to pass from the nature of the being He has given to man, this gift of personality, the possession of a personal will which has the lofty capacity of sharing in His own nature, of doing what He wills, of being "a fit viceroy of the world," and also of acting contrary to what He would have us do and be, "of fearfully solving the problem, how it is possible for evil to exist to which God may show His contrariety—which has proceeded from another will than God's will, and is therefore no expression of what His good pleasure is." He gives us the power of thought, but the thinking is ours; He gives us the power of will, but the volition, the moral character of the act in which good or evil resides, that is ours. All fatalistic theories, philosophical or religious, Moslem or Calvinistic, ignore this personality, miss what our author calls "the highest note in the scale of created natures,"—ignore in so doing any moral character in our nature and also in God's. Let not the reader imagine we have given our author's reply; we have only dimly indicated the direction taken. There are other questions put and worthily replied to which we cannot mention, but there is one more which we must not pass over in silence. How can the affections of love, anger, grief, disappointment be affirmed of God, who is immutable, Himself the originator of those conditions which effect change in us, but Himself is above all change? Here is a real question suggesting a

true difficulty. Some overcome this difficulty, they think, by saying these affections are figuratively applied to Him;—they are figures in God, but realities in man; refer to what is unrevealable in Him, and are best shadowed forth by the working of these affections in us. Truth, love, in Him are not answered to by this sense of truth and love in us. If such be the fact,—this is opposed to Scripture; if this be true, then not only does the light fail us in which we trusted, but, worse far, our capacity to receive light exists not. If our natures are not mirrors, dim and shadowy, we admit, of His own; if the original of our nature is not His; if the patterns are not in God, and we are the copies,—then, not only must Scripture be renounced, which assures us in its first page that we are made in the likeness of God, but God is to us ever unknown and unknowable. This denies that God's will, that is Himself, can be known by us. If this be true, or anything like it, as to our thinking is the essence of Dr. Mansell's able work on the "Limits of Religious Thought," then have we no resource but either atheism or abject superstition. The feeling and the capacity of being His children exist not. Our author found the difficulty solved in the Incarnation of the Son of God. "To move this difficulty from the path of His rational offspring towards well-being, internal harmony, and harmony with Himself, was a main end of God's manifesting Himself in the flesh. . . . The answer is, in one word, we believe in a God-man. Plato, Socrates, confessed a God: we confess Immanuel and His Father—such a God as no man sees, knows, understands, save inasmuch as he sees, knows, and understands the Man Christ Jesus. . . . But what, then, it may be asked, Was God a weakling infant? Did God weep human tears, or groan, or give up the Ghost? If disposed to give a short answer, in a free uncritical spirit, one would say, Yes; for Christ is God. But if we must answer the precise according to their precision, we reply, The Godhead was not born, died not, rose not; humanity did all this, but His humanity who is no less God than man: humanity did all this for the express purpose of revealing the God within; even as the higher powers of the material world make known to us their presence through a vehicle denser and to us more congenial. The humanity of Christ is that which translates the ineffable language of the Most High into man's native tongue. 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father,' not as another, but as one with Him. The light of Godhead is reflected from Him, and is also *refracted* through Him." . . . pp. 15, 16. Thus the reality of these affections in God is shown from the oneness of Christ with the Father. He adds, that the objection that love and anger are human emotions, and therefore cannot exist in Him, proceeds from a "mere confusion of spiritual principles with

things that accompany their working in our lower nature." The revelation of God in Christ is a revelation of His character, that is, of the Divine will, and establishes for us the knowableness of His will, and what it is. His will thus revealed is the only and sure basis of our entire faith and trust. We should like to quote lengthened passages of loftiest thought and expression on this very point, but space fails us, and we shall content ourselves with quoting a paragraph on *Belief and Unbelief*, and which, though it loses much of its force by being separated from its context, yet retains no slight value as an independent thought. After referring to the very common mistake "of regarding unbelief as a passive thing, a submitting to the consequences of an unhappy want; and faith as an active thing," he proceeds thus: "Now the very reverse is truth: unbelief is rebellious activity for the attainment of an object which we cannot leave in the hands of God, our own happiness: and the punishment is the fruit of its own doing; the creature of unbelief, not the creature of God: its worm, its *own* worm dieth not; its fire is not quenched. Faith is the cessation of independent activity for objects resigned to God: it is the man who knows he cannot swim in this flood, ceasing the struggle that might drown him, because he knows his passive body will be borne up safely by the waters. The will of God is bearing all things that yield to it towards the joy of their Lord." We wonder not that Archdeacon Hare, after reading this discourse on the Divine Will, sought the friendship of Mr. Scott, and retained it until the day of his death.

If F. W. Newman had read this discourse on *Revelation*, he could scarcely have laid it down as an axiom that a Book revelation is an impossibility. If one human spirit can reveal himself to another in words, in a letter, in a book, why may not the Father-Spirit use this same medium of revealing Himself to His children? God has not limited Himself to Scripture for this purpose. Creation is a revelation of Him, so is Providence, and so is the human spirit: He has revealed Himself by special miraculous messages addressed to His prophets. Scripture claims not sole revelation, affirms God to reveal Himself in these methods, and does not profess to exhaust all the instances in which He has thus revealed Himself. Scripture has a special revelation of its own, given nowhere but here, as well as an acknowledgment of these other sources; but its special purpose is to reveal the *Christ*, it testifies of Him. "It is an inspired history of Divine manifestations, *complete* in reference to its peculiar object. In the Bible one mind organizes, as it were, the many human minds of the subordinate authors, remote from one another in time and place, into a unity for the expression of one connected plan. It uses them, as a printer uses his types, that their suc-

cessive instrumentality may stamp one continuous and entire divine sentence. This particular selection of recorded manifestations forms a whole; each contribution bears on all the others in a way known only to the master workman. This is the distinguishing character of Scripture. The one idea of the pervading intelligence is the Christ." P. 54. As the knowledge of the facts of creation is not one with the knowledge of Him who thus reveals Himself; as the knowledge of the events of Providence is not one with their meaning, the key to which is furnished by every man's conscience; so the knowledge of the letter of Scripture, which is essential, as a vehicle, is not its true and essential meaning. "He who endeavours to form the truest conception of the object or events presented in any portion of Scripture, and at the same time remembers that this when possessed is but the vehicle to a presentment of God, who is a Spirit, and is known to the spiritual man alone, combines the two requisites to a meeting with God in the Bible."

The discourse on the *Kingdom of Christ* is one of the ablest in the volume, and should be read along with the discourses on *Romanism*, *Chartism*, and *Socialism*. This is also called the Kingdom of the Truth. To witness to this truth was the end of our Lord's mission to our world, for this was He born; and whosoever is born of the truth confesses Christ to be his King. Our author understands by this truth not so much the possession of any particular truth as a right relation of our spirits towards it—a heart for the truth. Essentially this is the same in Judaism as in Christianity, and differing only in degree. In the former, it exists in its visible and restricted form; in the latter, in its universal and spiritual form: in the one it exists in the oldness of the letter, in the other in the newness and breadth of the spirit. Jesus Christ came not to destroy the law but to fulfil it; he gave it a fulfilment by the working of the spirit of obedience and Sonship for ever unknown to the principle of law and servitude. There are two positions boldly taken in this discourse, and well illustrated, for which we are deeply thankful. He claims for Christianity the democratic idea in the modern sense. Greece, Rome, Germany, knew nothing of the worth of man as man. Greeks, Romans, proclaimed equality for their respective races, but servitude for the world outside them. The national tie was more sacred to the old world than the human. To be a Greek was a greater thing than to be a man. According to the true modern idea, to be a man is a greater thing than to be an Englishman, Frenchman, or American. This is the living root of modern democracy, this sanctity of a human soul; this is becoming the faith of kings and peoples alike, and claims to fashion modern Europe agreeably to itself. This has come to pass from

the fact of Christ having brought a message of love to all men, and from the Christian Church being established on the essential equality of men, irrespective of race, rank, or condition. Our author asks, "Whence came it? I say without shadow of doubt in my own mind, from Christianity altogether, heathenism had no such notion of man as man, had no glimmer of the preciousness of a soul." This is the working, in part, of that leaven with which Christianity hath leavened Christendom; has grown out of its spirit, and not from any distinct dogma or precept, and to this humanity must come unless the spirit of the system is violently repressed.

The other position laid down, and of equal moment, is the application of Christianity, being the life of man in all his relationships. The message of Christ is first addressed to the individual man, but should not be limited to that. Christ is the life of the individual, but no less the life of the family, and of the State. He is to be the life of the whole man. God's idea of the man, of the family, and of the State can be realized only in Christ. Our author's belief is that modern Dissenters and Ultramontanists in the Churches of Rome and England, though meaning essentially different things by the same words, are mistaken in their division of things secular and religious, and in contending that there is one province of human life, the State, which must be for ever unclean, and to which the kingdom of Christ is not to extend. He could not accept any existing manner in which the purpose of Christ in the State had been attempted; but failure in the effort hitherto is one thing, and the aim itself is wholly different. "I cannot desire Christianity for myself, or for my family, without desiring it for the nation; and supposing that desire fulfilled, there must be national acts indicating the presence of it." Surely the highest condition is that "when the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of the Lord, and of His Christ."

Additional value is given to the discourse on *Romanism* by the events of our day. Our author concedes as readily as any Romanist the need of *unity* and *authority*, acknowledges an obligation to Romanism for bearing testimony to this, denies, however, to this system the honour of satisfying this want, and contends that, while claiming to give us bread in our hunger, it only gives us a stone. Romanism points to a real evil, as old as sin, but its healing power is charlatanism and worse. After specifying the many causes which have led human spirits to bow to the *authoritative* claims of Romanism, he mentions as chief the "natural proneness of the human heart to idolatry." This system is not a native of Italy; would it were—but a growth of the human heart. Our author defines in the light of

Scripture what he means by idolatry. No thoughtful heathen would admit that his *idol*, the visible object before him, was what he worshipped, but would tell you he worshipped some power, some one who had condescended to identify himself with the idol. This is what any cultivated Romanist will tell us of his sacraments; he does not worship the crucifix, the host, the so-called sacrifice of the mass, but his Lord who is one with the bread and wine. Our author adds, "Idolatry is found existing among the Jewish people in two stages: the one leading them to adopt ordinances or to set up objects of superstitious trust without any divine authority, and the other leading them to make the divine ordinances themselves objects of superstitious trust." Of the one kind of idolatry the golden calf is an example, and of the other their trust in ordinances and specially their false reverence for the Temple. Clearly that is "idolatry wherever an object, or a person, or an ordinance external, is considered to be to me the pledge of a blessing from God of a spiritual nature, on any other ground than its being a channel, and nothing more than a channel, for the presentment of a spiritual object to my own spirit." This is to say that no ordinance however divinely ordained can have any virtue apart from the heart of the worshipper, save as "spiritually received." If there be any truth in this definition, all priestly theories of sacraments are in their very nature idolatrous, and all priestly practices too which exist in other communions than the Romish and Anglican. Claims such as are put forwards now-a-days by Anglican priests war with the letter and spirit of all Scripture; were never made by Apostles with all their special gifts; were not made by Romish priests until the darkest era of Christendom had come. Whatever may be said of the baptismal service of the Church of England, of her simple and spiritual communion service no doubt exists in our minds; and all the more as we remember how the note appended to that service is the dying testimony of the martyr Frith to the spiritual character of the Lord's Supper. Our author sees in this ritualistic movement, which he calls Laudism, which Arnold called Newmanism, which the public call Puseyism, only revived Romanism. We wonder that no one has named this system by the name of Bishop Gardiner who was its real author, and who enunciated it in words far too familiar to our liking,—Catholic Doctrine and Independence of the Roman See. The fact is our Anglican priests are more Romish than Rome, they out-Herod Herod. For example, according to Rome, lay baptism is valid, if the true form in the name of the Father, Son and the Spirit is used; but according to our Romish revivalists, the priest is everything, and the truth is nothing.

It was in our heart to write largely on this discourse on the *First Principles of Church Government*, but we cannot, and must close somewhat suddenly. In parting with the reader we have the satisfaction of knowing that we have called attention to a rare volume, and we have also the sad consciousness of having failed in what we proposed doing. The reader may find in this volume some things to which he cannot give a ready assent; but, if his heart is right, he cannot fail to be blessed by communing with a heart so large, and a mind so calm, patient, loyally true. He was not a member of any of our churches and ministries, but had a very kindly generous feeling towards us all; and if not a member of the church that is to-day, was a member of that holier and more catholic church that shall be, a citizen of that fair city that is being unveiled, and of which his whole life is a true earnest.

WILLIAM CALDWELL ROSCOE,

who was brought up a Unitarian, once discussing the subject, said to his biographer, "The simplicity of the doctrine of the unity of God is urged in its favour; but I do not know that I always feel this. I am not sure it is not *too* simple to be the full truth."

I gathered his meaning to be, that a voluntary self-revelation of the Divine Mind might have been expected to reveal even deeper complexities of spiritual relations in the eternal nature and essence than are found to exist in our humanity,—the simplicity of a harmonized complexity, not the simplicity of absolute unity.—Remains, 1, lxxxvii.

NOTICE BY EDITOR.

WITH this number of the CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR the responsibility of the present Editor ceases. He undertook the duties (in the Autumn of 1865) with much reluctance; but being strongly urged at a time when the Magazine had been for several months without a responsible Editor, he allowed personal considerations to be outweighed by the claims of a periodical which had always had his hearty sympathies, and, for many years, his constant assistance. He now resigns the office he has held, sincerely hoping that, under different and no doubt abler management, the CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR may be more effective than ever in promoting the objects it was designed to serve. And if in the future, more happily than in the past, there shall be that manly freedom of thought and inquiry, combined with reverence,—that unfearful criticism, kept sober by modesty—devoted to the furthering of the Truth which refuses to be divorced from Charity—of which this restless world and scarcely less uneasy Church are still in such sore need, no one will observe the better adaptation of the Magazine to the manifold and, in many respects, peculiar wants of the present day, with more satisfaction than he who with these lines brings his own connection with it to an end.

In taking his leave of readers, who, though of course for the most part unknown, have been constantly before his mind, and are endeared by the very service he has sought to render them, he respectfully begs them kindly to accept his best wishes with his affectionate “Farewell!”

To those Gentlemen who have been, to his fullest satisfaction, associated with him in literary labour, he owes the warmest acknowledgments of indebtedness; not only for their valuable assistance, but for the cordiality of their co-operation, and for the honourable and courteous spirit which has uniformly made the relation between Editor and contributor, to him, at least, such as to leave a deep and lasting feeling of esteem and gratitude.

H. H. DOBNEY.

Maidstone,

December 1, 1866.

BRIEF NOTICES OF BOOKS.

An Examination of Mr. J. S. Mill's Philosophy: being a Defence of Fundamental Truth. By JAMES MCCOSH, LL.D., &c. London: Macmillan & Co. 1866.

The Philosophy of the Conditioned, &c. By H. L. MANSEL, B.D. London: Alexander Strahan. 1866.

MOST of our readers are aware, we presume, of the controversy that ensued on the publication of the Bampton Lectures for 1858, "On the Limits of Religious Thought," by Mr. Mansel, the Waynflete Professor of Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy in the University of Oxford. This gentleman, the recognized disciple and defender of the late Sir William Hamilton, set himself in those lectures to expound and enforce the main principle of his master, viz.—that "the unconditioned is incognizable and inconceivable; its notion being only negative of the conditioned, which last can alone be positively known or conceived;" carrying the practical conclusion, "We are thus taught the salutary lesson that the capacity of thought is not to be constituted into the measure of existence; and are warned from recognizing the domain of our knowledge as necessarily co-extensive with the horizon of our faith." The principle, in fact, carries very much more.

Seeking to establish the doctrine that even what Revelation gives us concerning God is not, and cannot be, the very truth itself, but is only given us for the regulation of our conduct; and thus that when God is called just, righteous, holy, good, &c., we must not understand these or any other epithets when applied to Him to mean what they mean when applied by men to one another; and that the difference is not merely quantitative alone, but even qualitative;—thus (as was generally, and, indeed, as it seems, necessarily) making God to be still "the unknown God,"—it was no wonder that a storm of opposition should be raised.

Mr. Maurice (now raised to a similar chair in the sister University to that occupied by Mr. Mansel at Oxford) soon appeared with an indignant protest, "What is Revelation, &c.?" And Mr. John Stuart Mill, now M.P. for Westminster, a philosopher, and the son of a philosopher, but of a totally different sect to that of which Sir William Hamilton, though in some points original, may be regarded as the British representative, subjected the Hamiltonian doctrine to a searching and even scathing "Examination." With right good will did he expose the weak points in the philosophy of Mr. Mansel's master, and his defiantly bold denunciation of the dogma that righteousness and goodness when predicated of God must be something utterly unlike what is meant by such terms as predicated of man, became widely known far beyond the outermost circle of philosophy.

Dr. McCosh, also a Professor of Logic and Metaphysics, (viz., in Queen's College, Belfast) and who had already given to the public sufficient proof of his competency for metaphysical investigation, published early in the present year the work which stands at the head of this notice, in which he surveys the ground taken by both Sir William Hamilton and Mr. Mill. He had indeed in previous works taken exception to several of Sir William Hamilton's positions, thus anticipating some of Mr. Mill's objections, at the same time opposing some of the doctrines which Mr. Mill adopts. His present volume, therefore, is intended by him as a defence of fundamental truth against the supposed errors of both. And we are bound to say that Dr. McCosh, by this, his latest work, loses none of the high reputation he had previously acquired.

And now Mr. Mansel once more comes to the front, as indeed it was incumbent that he should; and, finding it impossible, within any reasonable time or limits, to follow Mr. Mill's Examination step by step to the end, selects the main point in dispute, and confines himself to the Philosophy of the Conditioned. In this small volume he exposes some of Mr. Mill's misapprehensions, and therefore misrepresentations, of Sir William Hamilton's statements, and makes perhaps the best defence of his position that is possible.

We have a deep sense of the absurdity, amounting perhaps to ridiculousness, of even mentioning such books in a brief notice of a few lines, and any indication of our own judgment on the points in dispute is here utterly out of the question. But dissenting, *in toto calo*, from whatever philosophy, so-called, shuts out God in reality from the entire realm of the knowable, we nevertheless unhesitatingly express the opinion that Mr. Mansel abundantly justifies his claim to a most respectful and candid hearing.

Autobiography of a French Protestant condemned to the Gallies for the Sake of his Religion. Translated from the French. Religious Tract Society.

WE heartily thank the Religious Tract Society for reprinting this very interesting volume. It is not the first translation, indeed; for it was originally translated by Oliver Goldsmith, under the pseudonym of James Willington, who says in his preface (dated 1758):—"Could the present performance teach one individual to value his religion by contrasting it with the furious spirit of Popery; could it contribute to make him enamoured with liberty by showing their unhappy situation whose possessions are held by so precarious a tenure as tyrannical caprice; could it promote his zeal in the cause of humanity, or give him a wish to imitate the virtues of the sufferer, or redress the injuries of the oppressed, then indeed the author will not have wrote in vain." The original title, given in the present edition, is "*Memoires d'un Protestant condamné aux Galeres de France pour Cause de Religion; écrits par lui même; Ouvrage, dans lequel, outre le recit des Souffrances de l'Auteur depuis 1700 jusqu'en 1713; on trouvera diverses Particularités curieuses, relatives à l'Histoire de ce Temps—là et une*"

Description exacte des Galeres et de leur Service. A Rotterdam, &c., M.D.C.C.LVII." In this original edition the names were denoted by initials, but as the real sufferer was known, and all the circumstances authenticated, the names were subsequently, as in the present volume, given. The sufferer himself was Jean Marteilhe, of Bergerac. We wish the book may find its way everywhere.

The Koran and the Bible; or, Islam and Christianity. By JOHN MUEHLEISEN-ARNOLD, B.D. Second Edition. London: Longman, Green & Co. 1866.

THIS book, by "the Consular Chaplain at Batavia, and late Hon. Sec. of the Moslem Missionary Society," is intended to awaken an intelligent interest in the Mohammedan world. As the author says, in his preface,—“Recent events in the East must have convinced us that we have not discharged our whole duty towards them by praying once a year that God may have ‘mercy upon all . . . Turks, . . . and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of His word.’ Nor can it any longer suffice to multiply learned treatises on Islam, without laying before the Church some really feasible proposition how to reach the two hundred millions of Moslems, so large a proportion of whom are under British rule, and who, to this day, constitute fully one-third of the entire Mission field of the world.”

Of all the religions of the world, that of Mohammed has always appeared to us the hardest for Christianity to conquer, and it has certainly seemed that the Missionary servants of Christ needed a very special and careful training to fit them for advantageously entering on their work among the zealous, and for the most part fiercely fanatic, professors of Islam. Mr. Arnold has brought to his task a thorough acquaintance with the Koran and his subject generally. And while we are here and there constrained to differ from him, we feel a strong conviction that his volume may be found of very great service by those who seek to understand, that they may the better grapple with, the difficulties in the way of winning the Moslem to the truth as it is in Jesus. The whole Missionary Church is under obligation to him.

The Year of Prayer: being Family Prayers for the Christian Year, suited to the Services and Commemorations of the Church. By HENRY ALFORD, D.D. London: Alexander Strahan. 1866.

BY “the Church” in this title, the Dean of Canterbury means of course his own Church. We Nonconformists, when we speak of “the Church,” so naturally mean the one Church of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that it sometimes gives us pause for a moment, when we find the exclusive definite article applied, albeit in sweet and happy unconsciousness, to one Church in particular, in a country where thousands of Christian Churches co-exist. But the Dean himself would not only recognize these other Protestant Churches, we verily believe he can rejoice in their being and in their usefulness.

There are many Christian households in which, from circumstances, if Family Prayer is to be observed at all, it must be by means of prepared

formularies: and he is no mean benefactor to such who can supply them with improved forms. This, for Church of England families, we think the excellent Dean of Canterbury has done. And with a view of promoting his object in circles where such a help to Family Devotion is needed, we transcribe his preface:—

“This book has been compiled in order to keep in view of the family the course of the Christian year as observed in the Festivals and Celebrations of the Church. In the ordinary arrangements of prayers for a month, this is totally lost sight of. Whether it be Christmas, or Easter, or Whitsuntide,—whether the season be one of penitence or triumph,—the same words are used.

“It has been my endeavour to keep the words and thoughts as simple as possible. I have found that, without exception, the books which I have been in the habit of using are written in a style and in language far above the comprehension of children and servants. The model aimed at has been the style of the Common Prayer Book, which is easy and familiar to all.

“A large proportion of the prayers will be found addressed to our Blessed Lord. It seems to me that there is no remedy likely to be so efficacious for the coldheartedness and decline of faith in our time as more humble devotion, and more ardent personal love, towards our great and merciful High Priest, the Divine Hearer and Answerer of Prayer.”

The worthy task which the Dean set himself he has, we think, admirably performed.

Sacred Hours by Living Streams. Popular Expositions of Divine Truth.
By REV. ROBERT KERR. London: Elliot Stock. 1866.

THIRTEEN sermons on, for the most part, very familiar texts, so that the reader might very naturally ask, Why this addition to our already voluminous printed Sermonology? And when the first sentence of the preface tells him that “The following discourses, with two or three exceptions, are selected from the pulpit efforts of the Author, during the first year of his ministry, to a small country congregation,” he is not unlikely perhaps somewhat to elevate the eyebrow. Since there are more than thirty thousand recognized ministers of the gospel in this little insular fraction of the globe, let us be thankful that not many of them print their first year’s pulpit efforts. For ourselves, we would rather a young man should exercise himself in reticence. However, Mr. Kerr did certainly preach very decent sermons in his first year, and we should be glad if every preacher in his noviciate did as well. When more of “the inevitable years” have passed over him he will perhaps be more chary of the introduction of scraps of poetry, and especially of those which belong to what has been called the “Wheelbarrow style.” Thus he ends one sermon, warning those “who have sat long under the sound of the Gospel, and are still unsaved:”

“Down, aye down! but the judge’s frown
Follows hard through that thickening gloom;
Or if aught gleams there, ’tis the past’s despair
Revived in that living tomb!

There fearful *sighs* for ever *arise*,
 And fears that can never be calmed ;
 Where souls are *lost*, and for ever are *tossed*,
 'Mong the wrecks that strew the fire-bound coast,
 The shores of the doubly damned."

Let us hope that this peroration was not too energetically delivered, and that the pathos of the preacher—learned by communion with Him who wept over Jerusalem, and who could not forbear praying for his murderers—somewhat counteracted the natural tendency of such a strain to harden those whom it did not for the moment terrify.

Scenes from the Life of St. Paul, and their Religious Lessons. By Rev. J. S. HOWSON, D.D. London: Religious Tract Society.

THIS work, by one of the joint authors of the well-known "Life and Epistles of St. Paul," a precious boon to the Church, will, from its name alone, need no commendation to ensure it a wide welcome. Mr. Howson says in his preface, "In the writing of these papers, two purposes mainly have been in view. I have aimed rather at the religious edification of the reader than at mere explanation and description; and I have carefully kept in mind that tendency to unbelief or half-belief, which, at present, is characteristic of the atmosphere by which we are surrounded." The volume is elegantly got up, with toned paper, good type, and beautiful binding, and moreover has fourteen illustrative engravings, by Paolo Priolo, Esq. It comes in time to take a high rank among the Gift books of the season.

Nest: a Tale of the Early British Christians. By Rev. J. BOXER. London: Elliot Stock. 1866.

THIS is a little book which may be put into the hands of the younger members of religious families. The scene is laid at the time of the coming of Augustine into England, and is intended to illustrate the purer and simpler Christianity which existed in Britain prior to its subjugation to the Papal see, and the consequences which flowed from the domination of Rome. Mr. Boxer was perfectly free to try to illustrate this important part of our ecclesiastical history by an interesting tale; but it is too obviously written from a quite modern and one-sided point of view. The conversations are all much too formal. The speakers all "talk book." But it is not given to every one to write dialogue naturally.

The Vicarious Sacrifice Grounded in Principles of Universal Obligation. By HORACE BUSHNELL, D.D. London: Alexander Strahan. 1866.

WE owe an apology to the publisher of Dr. Bushnell's latest work for having allowed so many months to pass without a notice. The fact is, the book was at once assigned for review to a gentleman whom we knew to be thoroughly competent and trustworthy for such a task:

but, owing to circumstances, his article did not come into the Editor's hands till the whole of the present number of the *SPECTATOR* was too far arranged to admit of any alteration. No one regrets this more than the Editor, who now can do no more than thus explain the delay.

There are very few earnest Christian thinkers of the present day, we imagine, who can profess themselves fully satisfied with those purely human theories about the divine fact that "Christ died for our sins," that so easily satisfied good and excellent men when the century was younger. A commercial community may for a time welcome explanations in happy harmony with its own habitual modes of thought; and a people proverbial for their loyalty, not only to law and the spirit of law, but to the barest technicalities and forms of law, may be content with mere legal aspects of a work which nevertheless transcends all human institutions and modes of action. But the time will come—for "the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns"—when one and another will ask whether the explanation they once accepted without dream of question (as, for ages, the Ptolemaic theory of the heavens was scientific orthodoxy, to be meekly and uninquiringly received by all) so fully satisfies all the terms of the mighty problem, as that Christ's most thoughtful and earnest disciples, to the very end of time, will have nothing to do but go on repeating the so-called Evangelical formulas of an earlier (though far enough from the earliest) age. Such a time has come. No solemn warnings, no intimations of anathemas ready to be uttered, have been able to keep back the inquiry, whether, after all, we have not been, unscripturally and disloyally to the Master, identifying far too closely and vitally the mere theories of men like ourselves with the blessed revelations of Heaven? Not, as is often insinuated, in dislike of Evangelical truth; not in the preference of license for the freedom which is as much a duty as a privilege; not in rash fondness for speculation and novelty; but in deeper reverence for truth, in a more solemn sense of personal responsibility for our belief and teaching, have many men, here and there, broken loose from the control of men no fitter to be masters than themselves, and turned their backs on the close atmosphere of theological schools, that they may sit the more simply at the feet of the Heavenly Teacher, and listen more uninterruptedly for the voice of the Spirit interpreting the solemn mystery of the Cross.

Dr. Bushnell seeks to help his brethren, and all thanks and honour to him for the effort. But while we thoroughly appreciate his labour, and often go with him heartily, we do not think he has spoken the very word which so many a heart throbs to hear, and which the inquirers we are thinking of can take as final. There is very much in his book that deserves careful and candid consideration, with some things from which we dissent *in toto*. And the atrocious Americanisms which disfigure it are very offensive. Still, we very warmly thank Dr. Bushnell for his work, and hope it may be found helpful even to those who, nevertheless, like the disciples of John, "look for another." In fact, it cannot be read without advantage to both mind and heart, both conscience and life. It deserves a generous reception.

Familiar Lectures on Scientific Subjects; By SIR JOHN F. W. HERSCHELL, Bart, &c., &c. London: Alexander Strahan. 1866.

WE are glad to do all we can to make this volume known; and, by way of stimulating the desire to obtain and study it, we give the contents:—I. About Volcanoes and Earthquakes; II. The Sun; III. On Comets; IV. The Weather and Weather Prophets; V. Celestial Measurements and Weighings; VI., VII., and VIII. On Light; IX. On Sensorial Vision; X. The Yard, the Pendulum, and the Metre; XI. On Atoms, a dialogue; XII. On the Origin of Force; XIII. On the Absorption of Light by Coloured Media; XIV. On the Estimation of Skill in Target-shooting.

The first three lectures were delivered to a village audience, and were subsequently printed in *Good Words*, together with several of the others, and the whole will surely be one of the most acceptable births of the present "publishing season." We heartily wish it may find its way into all our homes.

The Throne of David: by Rev. J. H. INGRAHAM, LL.D. London: Virtue, Brothers & Co. 1866.

A FEW months since we commended two other works of this author to our younger readers, viz., "The Prince of the House of David," and "The Pillar of Fire." The present volume, designed in like manner to bring the times, and persons, and events of Scripture more vividly before the mind, will find certainly as much acceptance. We think Dr. Ingraham has rendered a valuable service by the graphic presentation of the characters and scenes of the Bible. Now and then we fancy a little more care to keep out quite modern ideas or words would have been well; as, for instance, when Saul, on the eve of his last and fatal fight, apostrophises the sleeping Ishbosheth, and says: "Thy misfortunes, my poor delicate boy, should have kept thee in thy mother's boudoir," the French word, to our ear, but ill assimilates with those early Hebrew days. But this is trifling—scarcely worth the mention. The book, for its purposes, is a good book, and has our hearty commendation to our young friends.

The Pulpit Analyst. Edited by JOSEPH PARKER, D.D. Vol. I. London: Jackson, Walford, & Hodder. 1866.

THIS Magazine, we are told, "is designed to form a medium of intercourse between preachers and thinkers of all denominations." We welcomed it on its first appearance, and now at the close of its first year we are happy to congratulate Dr. Parker and his coadjutors on the success with which they have been enabled to carry out their design. May it go on and prosper.

Ritualism in the English Church, in its relation to Scripture, Piety, and Law. By ROBERT VAUGHAN, D.D. London: Jackson, Walford, & Hodder. 1866.

DR. VAUGHAN will not let himself be excused from work. Entitled

to "rest and be thankful," he spurns repose while there is yet any service he can render to the cause that has had his heart and life-long energies. Deeming "the attempt just now made to embody doctrine and sentiment in 'outward and visible signs' in a manner not warranted by Scripture, nor by the law of the English Church, fraught with peril to the interests of religious truth and of religious life," he gives to English Christians this well-timed volume, which is admirably adapted to the purpose of its venerable and accomplished author.

· *The Glorious Gospel unfolded.* By HENRY WEBB. London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., 1866.

Six hundred pages, divided into fifty-eight chapters, of theological reading. An extract from the preface, will give an idea of the author's method and range. "In this work I have viewed the Gospel in its grand characteristics as the Divine Dispensation of Grace, the Reign of Heaven, the Word of Grace, and the Life of Grace, chaps. i, ii. By this is God, the gracious ruler, discovered in His glorious perfections, chaps. iii, iv. By this is the grace of God towards man, the subject of the Divine grace, made known in its power, in its wisdom, and in its degrees of manifestation as the kingdom of Heaven, chaps. v—xii. In these manifestations we consider the incarnation, exaltation, and intercession of the Son of God; and the sundry doctrines wrapped up in the application of salvation to individuals, through the Mediator Christ Jesus, chaps. xiii—xxxi. Appended to this part of the work are sundry chapters expository of disputed points of personal salvation, chaps. xxxii—xli. The view of the Gospel as the Kingdom of Heaven, is then resumed by the consideration of its administration, its commands, privileges, and progress, to the Millennium, and the last judgment and consummation of all things, chaps. xliii—xlix. The work then closes with sundry expository and vindicatory chapters on the grace and justice displayed by God towards mankind, chaps. l—lviii."

The discerning reader of this epitome will anticipate the character of the book. It presents what is called "Calvinistic Theology" over again in its old form. The author uses no arts of style; he attempts no clever Biblical criticisms; he makes no reference to distinctively modern forms of thought; and we freely confess that occasionally we find the bones "very dry." At the same time we cannot withhold our respect from the writer for his industry, and for his study, and dauntless attachment to his system. Nor is his book marred by signs of bad temper; although, perhaps, it would have been better if, in the knottier points of the argument, the references to the obstinacy of "the carnal mind" had been less frequent. Such references cannot conciliate an opponent; and, moreover, suggest the reflection, now and then, that this is a dangerously convenient method of cutting knots. Theological writers, of all sides, too often forget that those who oppose some of their conclusions most firmly are, frequently, not "carnal men," but Christians, quite as good as themselves. Mr. Webb's book contains numerous quotations from John Owen and

others; and we think it would have been more satisfactory had the extracts, in some cases, been more distinctly marked. Still, the work, as a whole, deserves a good word, and the attention of those who are in sympathy with the views advocated in it.

Expositions on the Epistles of the New Testament. By C. D. MARSTON, M.A. London: John F. Shaw & Co. 1865.

The Prayer that Teaches to Pray. By REV. MARCUS DODS, A.M. Second Edition. Edinburgh: Inglis & Jack, 1866.

HELPS to the study of the Bible "for the general reader" are happily plentiful. Mr. Marston's little volume is a judicious contribution to this department of literature. He classifies his observations upon each Epistle thus:—I. Circumstances under which the Epistle was written. II. Contents. III. Short Comments. The remarks under each head are clear, concise, and interesting. It is a good book for Sunday-school teachers; and the author will do well to fulfil his promise of another volume of *Expositions on the Epistles* not included in this. We must add, however, that the "Introduction" and "General Remarks" are somewhat feeble, and not worthy of the rest of the book.

We are glad to find that Mr. Dod's sermons on "The Lord's Prayer," have reached a second edition. They are beautifully simple, reverent, thoughtful, and suggestive. It is a book we like to keep upon our table.

The Olive Branch. A Collection of Original Tunes composed expressly for, and especially adapted to, the most popular and favourite Psalms and Hymns for Congregational use; with a Selection of Single and Double Chants and Responses. Composed and Arranged by HENRY T. LESLIE, Mus. Doc. London: F. Pitman. 1866.

WE have requested a musical friend of true taste and feeling to give us an opinion of this modest little book, and he speaks of it very favourably.

Washed Ashore; or the Tower of Stourmont Bay. By WILLIAM KINGSTON. London: Jackson, Walford, & Hodder. 1866.

ANOTHER story for our young folks, nicely printed and got up, with a number of illustrations very happily conceived and admirably executed. It deserves to be a favourite.

Nettie's Mission; Stories Illustrative of the Lord's Prayer. By ALICE GREY. London: James Nisbet & Co. 1866.

WE put this prettily illustrated little book into the hands of a lady who has all through life had much to do with young folks, and she earnestly begs us to recommend it very heartily.

